

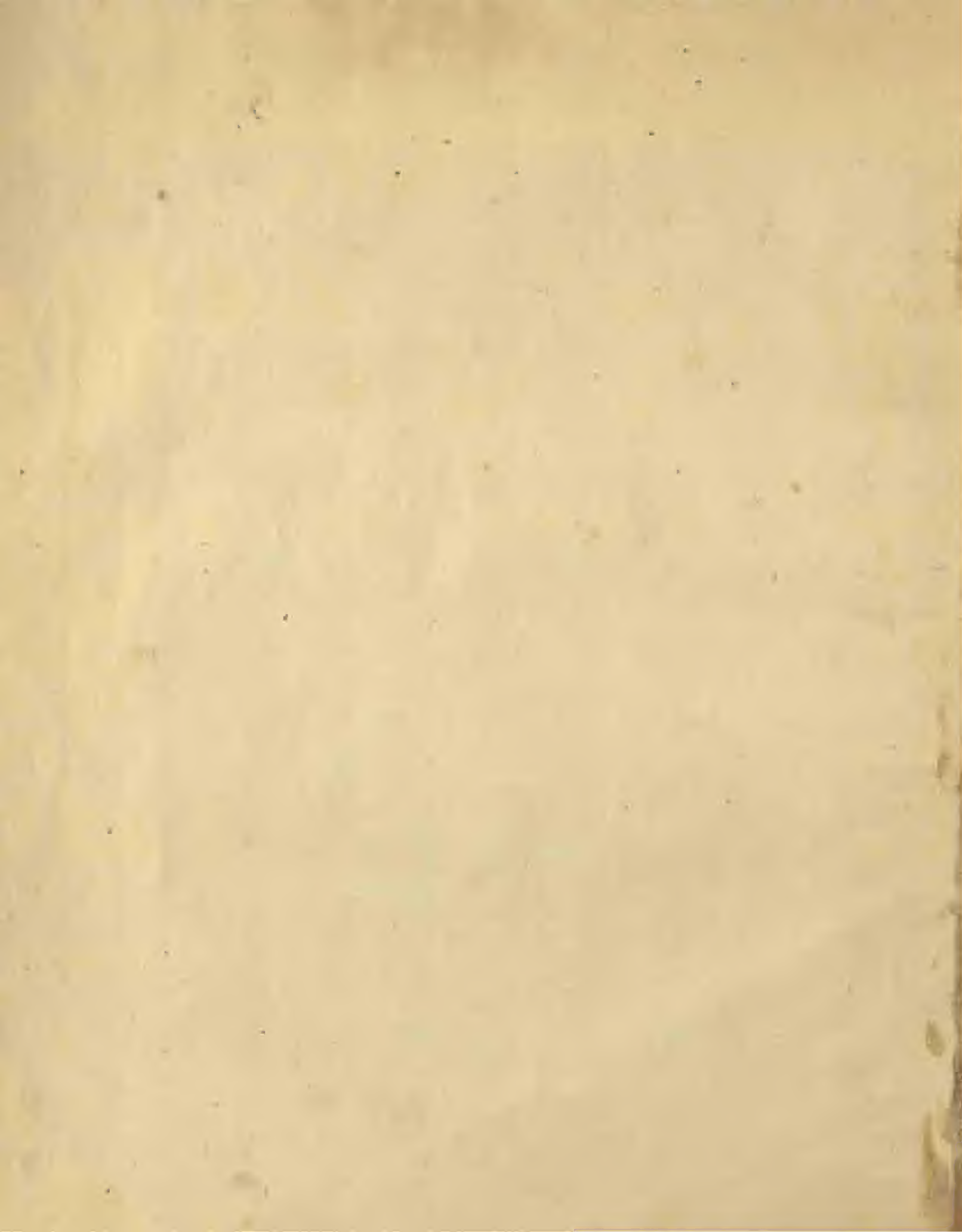
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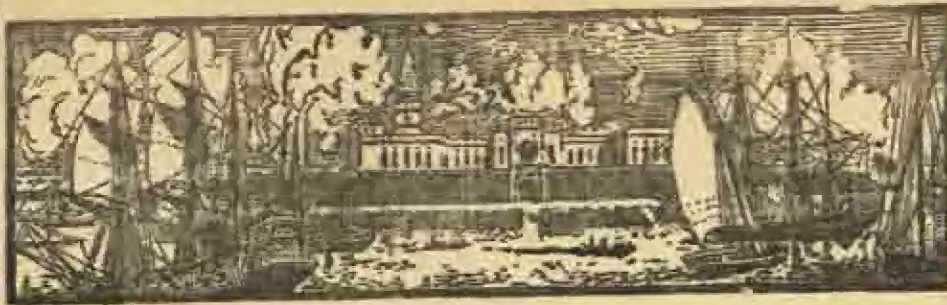
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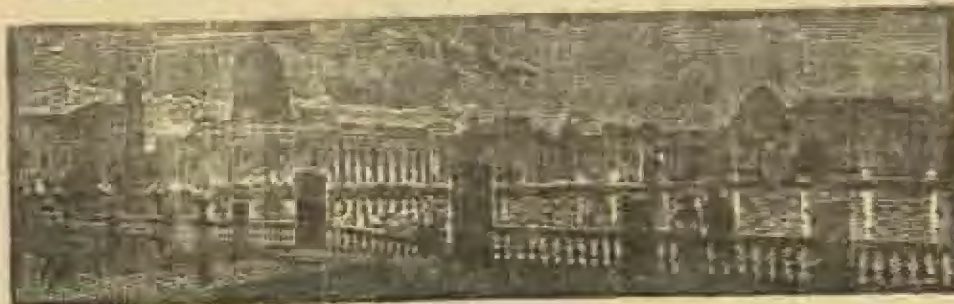
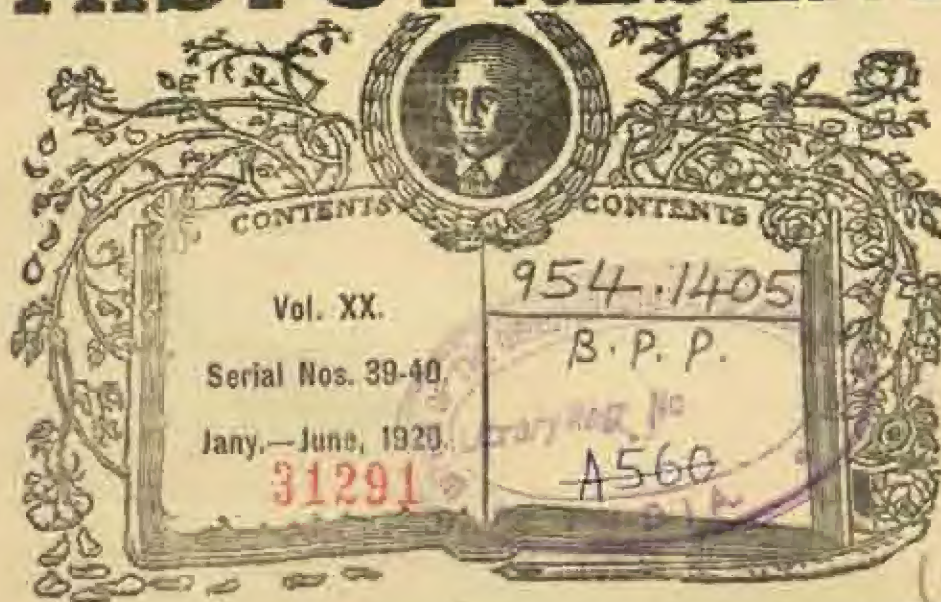
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BENGAL PAST & PRESENT



JOURNAL OF THE CALCUTTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The Nesbitt-Thompson Papers—VIII.

No. 75.

PENTON LODGE.

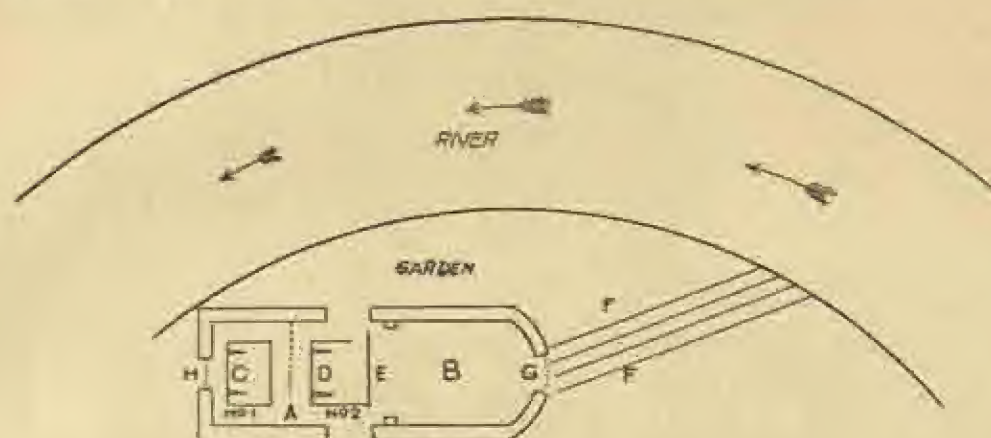
1st Jany. 1798.

My dear and hon'd. Sir,

Idly and unprofitably as I shall in all probability pass the ensuing year I will at least begin it well; and better I cannot begin it than by devoting to you, next to our great and common Benefactor, that Almighty Being who has made you beneficent and me grateful, the first offices of it. Turner will have told you that I accompanied him as far as Newbury for the Purpose of conversing with Mr. Toomer on the subject of his Fishery, and if you did not know that the unemployed have the least Leisure you would perhaps wonder that I have not till now been able to find a moment for imparting to you the Result of my Enquiries. I fear it will not afford you that Fulness of Satisfaction which your own keen and accurate Spirit of Investigation may have led you to expect, alas, from mine. Fortune seldom favours the inactive. The Day which after much Procrastination I at length chose for my Journey to Newbury was unluckily *that* of the market. Mr. Toomer not only keeps an Ironmongers Shop but a Bank and the Employments of both left him no leisure for attending to enquiries even on the subject of his Hobby Horse, and even coming from a person whom he so much respects as he professes to do you. By his watch he gave me exactly ten minutes. I shall be glad if they were so well employed as to effect in any tolerable degree your purpose. He says he will most readily answer any letters you may write to him on the subject and I think you may from his performance of his promise obtain from him that Communication of his Discoveries for which you seemed to wish and which will probably die with him unless called forth by some such Application, merely because he does not think them worth the trouble of imparting.

You were certainly led from his conversation very much to overrate the extent of his Plan. It was simply intended for fattening or as he termed it *growing* Trout. If I mistake not he said that in Seven Weeks he had added to the Weight of a single Trout seven pounds. When He entered on this undertaking I am convinced he meant only to provide a place for the confine-

ment of the Fish, and that it was by accident he afterwards discovered that the Structure of his Building was calculated to reveal to him all the "*Secrets of their Prison House?*" I will attempt to give you a drawing of it.



A. Describes the Ground Plan of a small wooden House covered with Tiles—

Feet.

Heighth of the Walls from the Eves to the Floor	...	about	6
Length	...	...	about 9
Breadth	...	...	about 6

No. 1. Part of the House A separated below the Floor from No. 2 by Wire Work being merely a Receptacle or Stew for the Fish first destined to the Kitchen.

No. 2. The other Part of the House A separated below the Floor from No. 2 (*sic.*) by Wire Work as aforesaid at one End, and open at the other End below the Water to the Airing Court or open yard—B. When the House A is darkened it is in this Part of it (*viz.*, in No. 2) that upon opening the Trap Door D, the Fish are seen without being able to behold their Spectators. Mr. Toomer says that amongst the Candidates for food he could put it into the gaping mouth of any one he chose and that as the Fish retired he has frequently stroked it with his hand from the head to the Tail.

B. An Enclosure open at the Top, intended as an Airing Court for the Fish and to give them the Blessings of Air and Sun.

C. Trap Door in No. 1.

D. Trap Door in No. 2.

E. A pair of folding Doors—reaching from the Eves of the House to the Surface of the Water, and separating it above the Water from the Air[ing Court]. B. These Doors are shut only for the Pur[pose] of darkening the House, at other times they a[re] open.

FF. Two Trunks for conveying the Water to the [blank].

G. A Grating for Admitting the Water.

H. A Grating for discharging the Water.

The depth of the water within the walls is about four feet. The walls of the Court and of the House are of the same height viz. about 6 feet above the surface of the water and are built on Piles. A Plate of timber runs along the top of the piles and on this plate the walls are erected. From the surface of the water to its bottom the enclosure is perfected by what Mr. Toomer calls *pugged Paling*, that is, by Boards fastened on the outside of the piles either at right angles or parallel with them, if the latter, the lower ends of the Boards are driven into the ground, and their upper ends are nailed to the plating. Beneath the water consequently there are snug recesses, the sides of which are formed by the piles, the backs by the pugged piling, (*sic*) and the tops by the plate of timber. It is into these recesses presented by accident and not into any holes formed as you supposed, for the express purpose, that the Trouts retired when alarmed. Nor was it in these recesses that they deposited their Spawn, but on the gravel at the bottom of the water, and commonly in the Airing Court—each pair of trouts vigilantly guarding their own Spawn. The natural History of the Animal you will get from Mr. Toomer himself, my enquiries were limited to his Edifice. He attributed his success in breeding and fattening fish within this enclosure to the rapidity of the stream which run through it, the clearness of its bottom, the nature of the water and the properties which it acquired by flowing so near a large town. He said that they [fo]und in it a variety of substances suited to their maintenance, [but] that he was still obliged to feed them plentifully, and that [it w]as almost the business of one man to take care of them, [the] food he gave them consisted chiefly of worms. [The b]uilding still remains unaltered in every part of its [?] construe]tion and the water still passes through it, but [the stre]am has lost its former rapidity and from this cause simply the Fishery is spoilt. The stream which before sat with all its violence on this bank, is now turned to the other, leaving the water near the fishery almost stagnant, or at best moving but in a lazy circle. The corollary from all this seems to be

1st That at the Head of your Water you may erect this Sort of Cage for Trout.

2nd That as the Water just rising from the Spring cannot probably be impregnated with Substances suited to the Support of the Trout, they will require a greater supply from you.

3. That they will no doubt live in this confinement as Birds do in a

cage but that it is very uncertain whether they will either Breed or grow fat there.

Yours most faithfully,

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

P.S.—I received my letters and will pay you for their postage. You may receive 3 India Bonds belonging to Phipps's Estate, and you shall have a full account. We are all well and join in fervent wishes for the welfare of Mrs. Hastings and yourself.

[Addressed to:—]

WARREN HASTINGS, Esq.,

Daylsford House,

Chipping Norton.

No. 76.

To WARREN HASTINGS, Esq.

PENTON LODGE,

22nd Feby. 1798.

My dear Sir,

Captn. Thomas Denton is the brother in law of White in Calcutta, who to the very utmost of his power has shewn himself your Admirer, and who is much my friend. For many others also of Captn. Denton's near relations I have a great regard. It is some time since I endeavoured to interest you in behalf of an Application which He was then making for the Command of the *Seallow* Packet—untoward circumstances compelled him for a while to desist from his pursuit but he is now in a situation to renew it. Permit me to hope that as far as you conveniently can you will aid him in it, and particularly let me request that if the attempt is not improper or unpleasant you will try to procure for him the good offices of Mr. Inglis. Captn. Denton tells me that he has been above twenty years in the Sea Service of the East India Company, and it is probable that you as well as myself have heard him spoken of as a good officer. These I believe are the public grounds on which he principally rests his application, and I flatter myself that they will be rather strengthened than weakened by the private considerations which I confess help to make me the humble Advocate of his Pretensions. He has been unfortunate, is poor, and has a wife with a family of five young children. All you can with propriety do to serve him I am sure you will, and I love you too well to wish you should do more.

I am, my dear Sir, Your obliged and oblt. hble. servt.

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

No. 77.

PENTON LODGE,
20th April, 1798.

My dear Sir,

I do assure you I never felt greater pain in any Application I ever made than in that with which I troubled you when you were last in town. I knew how anxiously both Mrs. Hastings and yourself wished to procure a Writership for Henry Powney, and I at the same time felt in their full force all the considerations by which your generous nature was restrained from so early a call on the friendship and gratitude of Coll. Toone. The very critical situation however of Henry Powney and his claims on me made it my duty to do for him that which I very much doubt whether I should have done for myself, and painful as was the duty I performed it. I saw, my dear Sir, the struggle of your mind, and my own deeply participated in the pain of the conflict. I have often thought that nothing could add to my esteem and affection for you. But your conduct on this as on other occasions has taught me the Fallacy of such a conclusion, and convinced me that nothing is so great as to preclude the possibility of increase. Your application to Toone must have cost you much, and I know how to estimate it. It's failure instead of lessening adds to the weight of the obligation which it imposes on me. For I know that the ill-success of your request robs you of that which could have best rewarded you for the pain of making it. I flatter myself however that the sacrifice which you have made will not be wholly scattered to the winds, but that it will ascend to Heaven, and that as Toone now knows your wishes he will somehow or other effect their completion. In January it seems he is to have a nomination either to Madras or Bombay. Henry Powney will be glad of either. The age I understand to which writerships are limited is twenty-two. He will be then only twenty-three. It is possible that his nomination may pass without an examination of his age. If the examination be made its true end and object may perhaps be virtually satisfied by a statement that he has been actually in India above three years and that consequently the period of his superannuation has been so passed as to fit rather than to disqualify him for his appointment. But if the objection with respect to Henry shall be found altogether insuperable it will not exist against Edward, the youngest of all Mrs. Powney's Children. He is now at sea as a Guinea Pig in the *Lord Hawksbury*, but upon trial of this profession he does not like it, nor do his brother or his other friends think him likely to prosper in it. It is indeed determined that, to whatever other Pursuit he may be devoted, he shall not persevere in this. For Edward therefore, if poor Henry cannot possibly obtain it, a writership to either of the settlements except Bencoolen will be a consum-

mation most devoutly to be wished, and I hold it up therefore as a matter of consolation to the truly benevolent Hearts of Mrs. Hastings and yourself that though all your efforts to serve the family of your deceased friend in the mode of which she was peculiarly solicitous have hitherto proved ineffectual they may yet by the Blessing of God attain their object. The possibility still exists, and knowing that you will if you can avail yourself of it, I shall say nothing further on the subject. Bosanquet give me a writership for a friend! If I wanted bread for myself I should not through his influence hope to procure it even as a labourer in the India House.

There is a sort of fatality attending you. In your pecuniary concerns you are destined never to have a good bargain. If I were a Heathen I should say you had never sacrificed to Plutus and that the God was offended with you. You may recollect how scrupulously I insisted on giving you 1s. 6d. for Lord Clare's speech. But as the Devil would have it whilst I paid you for one book I robbed you of another. Upon applying the next morning in the Stage Coach to my Pocket for the Chancellors Speech I to my great mortification pulled out the Castle Spectre. I hope there is nothing of evil Portent in the circumstance. But considering his Lordship's influence at the *Castle*, and the Bloody Tendency of his councils the Title is almost as well suited to him as to the play. To me he does not appear a Spirit of Health, but a Goblin damned, and his intents most horrible. He that wins may laugh, and I confess I could not help chuckling to think how completely I had deprived you of both the Books which you provided for your Amusement in London. Remember us most kindly to our dear Mrs. Hastings and believe me.

Truly Your's
GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

PENTON LODGE,

No. 78.

Monday, 11th June 1798.

My dear and hon'd. Sir,

I have employed the greater part of these three or four last days in trying to find amongst my papers evidence of the circumstances under which I found and transmitted to you Nobkissen's Bond, but without success.

I find the copy of a letter which I wrote to you from India on the 18th September 1787. It informed you that I had found several of your private papers and that I had sent them to you under the care of a Mr. Young who was going to England in the *Ravenworth*. I at the same time sent you as an enclosure in my letter a list of those papers. The list was numbered 2, but unfortunately I kept no copy of it. As the letter besides giving you a full account of the methods I had taken to find a Bureau which you had lost,

detailed also the steps I had taken and those which I intended to pursue for obtaining the Testimonials of the Natives in your favor, it is possible that you may have kept the letter and that with it you may find it's enclosure No. 2. If you do I flatter myself it will mention Nobkissen's Bond as one of the papers which I had so recently discovered and then transmitted to you. If it does not, I shall be able to give no evidence on the subject. Permit me to request that you will be at the trouble of looking for the list and that if you find it you will send me a copy of it, with any such hints as may occur to you for aiding my recollection of a circumstance which being of importance to you I ought I confess to remember better than I do. I shall try by my own efforts to procure the information which Shawe wishes to obtain from me.

Mrs. Thompson I thank God continues to enjoy her usual good health—our children for this fortnight past have been afflicted with the Hooping Cough, but not in a very violent degree. I was last week in London for a few days, and was happy to learn not only that Mrs. Hastings and yourself were in high health and spirits, but that Mr. and Mrs. Imhoff were returned from Lisbon happy in the great Blessing which they had sought there. I sincerely hope that they may long and uninterruptedly enjoy it. I am so busy in making my Hay that I scarcely allow myself time to think whose Horses are to eat it, whether my own or those of France, or of the English Army or of English Rebels. Where do you suppose Bunoparte is gone? If I had heard any one say to Asia I should not have thought him mad, but I am afraid to say so myself lest others should think me mad. You were right when in Allusion to Strafford's trial you thought your own the prelude to great calamities.

G. N. S.

Toone has behaved nobly and has filled us with gratitude to you and Mrs. Hastings as well as to himself.

[Addressed to:—]

WARREN HASTINGS ESQ.,

Daylsford House,

Chipping Norton.

No. 79.

PENTON LODGE,

Tuesday 21st August 1798.

My dear and bond. Sir,

My remissness in thanking you for your last truly kind letter, is but ill calculated to convince you of the delight and gratitude with which I read it. One of the advantages of your present situation is that you may

listen to the professions of your admirers without any distrust of their sincerity, and I avail myself of it to assure you that there is no human being for whom I have half the veneration I feel for you. You may therefore conceive how happy I was rendered by your approval of my conduct on an occasion by far to me the most interesting and important of my whole life. It is I believe a truth that without my efforts you would not have received the testimonials of the Natives, but it is I am thoroughly convinced a much more indisputable truth that such efforts as mine multiplied a hundred fold could not have procured them for any other man in existence. Praun Kishurn Sing when he brought me some of them said—"It is for Mr. Hastings only that this could be performed. Lord Cornwallis though he is now in the Government could not obtain such documents in his favor were he to seek them with all his influence."

Though I have not elevation of mind enough to covet fame I confess I am solicitous of the good opinion of the few who are dear to me and *laudare a te laudato viro* I shall always consider as my highest honor and greatest happiness. It is I acknowledge to advance myself in your esteem that I tell you I had much to struggle with in the Execution of the Commission you assigned me. Both Shore and Larkins treated it as impunctible. Lord Cornwallis and Col. Ross affected to consider it as ill advised, and indiscreetly conducted. Though you had left very few enemies there were still enough of them to thwart and impede the progress of an individual so humble and unsupported as myself in an undertaking of so much delicacy and difficulty. In illustration of the latter position I will give you one instance which I select not because it is above all others the most convincing, but because it is the most simple.

Cowper was in the Board of Revenue, and if I mistake not the President of it, he was certainly its most efficient member. he was become the only powerful protector of Gunga Govind Sing and Praun Kishurn against a combination of villains almost as rancorous and unprincipled as those who were opposed to yourself in England. Without his approbation Praun Kishurn Sing could render me no effectual assistance, and Hatch the Collector of Dinagepoor and others of his dependents consulting what they conceived would be his wish had, I found, under a variety of futile pretexts refused to forward to the Presidency Testimonials which had been tendered to them for that purpose. It became necessary for me therefore to conciliate to my undertaking the Good Will of Cowper. Fortunately I had entertained for him those sentiments which facilitated the attempt. Even when you were in India and during the height of those animosities which his intemperance and I fear the evil designs of others had generated between you, I

attributed much of his misconduct to mistaken notions of honor towards Bristow and after your departure I had admired him for his manly support of many of your native friends. In our common defence of them I had frequent communication with him, and I found him capable of much elevation of sentiment—animated in the praise of virtue, and indignant against every thing base and mean. I therefore ventured to write to him the following letter.

(Copy.)

Alapoor, 11th October 1787.

"Dear Cowper.

"I will not apologize for the Liberty I take in addressing you on the subject of this letter, since it is a liberty prompted by the very favourable opinion which I entertain of your character. Mr. Hastings in letters received by the *Minerva* and addressed to Mr. Shore and myself has appealed through us to the Natives of this country for their opinion of his conduct; not doubting that their testimonies will clear at least his future Fame from many of the aspersions with which his enemies in England have laboured to blacken it.

"Praun Kisshun Sing has promised his assistance in collecting the suffrages of the inhabitants of Bengal, but impressed with a grateful sense of the patronage with which you have honoured him. He thinks that he is in candour bound to make known to you the part he is prepared to act.

"Far from discouraging this proof of his attachment to an absent and persecuted benefactor you will I am convinced approve it, and, unless I am much deceived, his conduct on this occasion will serve to confirm the favourable opinion which you already entertain of him.

"To many minds I might appear to be acting a very hazardous part in thus freely communicating to you a design which has Mr. Hasting's interest for it's object; but it is not the interest of Mr. Hastings alone—circumstanced as he is, it is the common interest of Truth, of Justice, of Humanity, and I am sure therefore that in you it will not find an enemy.

"In truth Cowper I feel a conviction grounded on my observation of you during the time I have known you, that however causes originating more in others than in yourselves may laterly have placed you in opposite Lines of Politicks you cannot approve the conduct of his enemies in England, nor wish to deny him any fair and honourable means of doing Justice to his injured Reputation. It is in this conviction that I have ventured to write to you and that I subscribe myself with great esteem.

"Most truly your's

"Geo. NESBITT THOMPSON."

No. 80.

PEXTON LODGE,

Friday, 31st August, 1798.

My dear and kind Sir,

I reached home yesterday by Dinner Time, and had the Happiness to find my Wife and Children well. She is to set out this Evening for Newbury in her way to Bisham Abbey, and her Departure consequently gives additional value to the very few Hours which are yet to precede it. I cannot however help devoting a small Portion of the Interval to my Friends at Daysford, especially as there will be no Post tomorrow. I thank both Mrs. Hastings and yourself for your kind Attention to me. When you want next to enforce my Attendance by a Summons that cannot be resisted tell me you are alone. Never again present the Cup of Friendship to me with any Alloy. Let me drink of it full only of the pure Delights which I find in her Conversation and yours. I am not made for great Men. I receive so little Pleasure in their Company that I am sure they can receive none in mine. "*Præmibus placens Veris*" will never be either my Praise or my Disgrace.

Dr. White is sure that your Book has been received and read at Christchurch, but whether it has been deposited in the publick Library of the College; or in the private Library of the Dean or any other Person He knew not. He promised to make the Enquiry by *examining the Catalogue of the Public Library* and to acquaint you with the Result of it. In this Mode the Enquiry can offend no one, and will be attended with all the Certainty you can wish. If the Book is not yet in the Public Library Send one to Dr. White and He will deposit it there.

Bogles Narrative contains no Copy of the Letter from the Teshoo Lama, nor as I could find, any mention of it. Bogle left Bahar on his Mission in June 1774. It is but fair to tell you that Turner had intended to prefix to his Narrative an Introduction of the Sort which it seemed to me so much to want. This perhaps may absolve you from a Part of the Burthen with which I so presumptuously endeavoured to load you. But certainly not from the whole of it, since the whole University will never be able so well as yourself to explain your Objects in seeking an Intercourse with China through Thiber and Botan, nor the Causes which led you to think the Attempt practicable. May God bless both you and Mrs. Hastings, and reward your Virtues.

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

[Addressed to—]

WARREN HASTINGS, Esq.,

Daysford House,

Chipping Norton.

No. 81.

PESTON LODGE,
19th Sept. 1798.

My dear Toone,

I have had the pleasure to hear of you both from Daylesford and Bisham Abbey, and it is with unfeigned joy I congratulate not only yourself but Mrs. Toone and all your little ones on your returning health. I sincerely hope that it will be soon perfectly reestablished.

By the directions of Mr. and Mrs. Hastings transmitted to me through George Powney who lately called on them, I send you the enclosed papers, most earnestly hoping that the admission of Henry Powney to the service will prevent the necessity of recurring to the certificate of his younger Brother's Age.

Before the death of Mrs. Powney, I received from her a register of the ages of all her children. By this it appears that Henry George Claud Powney was born 6th January 1776. He consequently will not be twenty three years old till the 6th January 1799.

I have no means of recurring to the Act of Parliament which prescribes the Age of Writers, but according to my recollection of it, it can be only by a severe enforcement of it's letter against its spirit that Henry can be considered as too old for an appointment. Till he has attained the age of twenty three years, he can not be said to have completed more years of his age than twenty two; consequently if his nomination is made any time before the 6th January 1799 he will not be too old to receive the benefit of it. Besides the spirit of the Act, and I admit it to be a wise and wholesome spirit, was, to guard the service on the one hand against boys too raw and young to have received the rudiments of a useful education and on the other against men too old and hackneyed in the ways of the world to bring with them into the service dispositions suited to the duties of it—against ruined Gamesters, bankrupt speculators, desperate adventurers and the outcasts in short of all other professions and pursuits. If such be in truth the spirit of the Act Henry comes not within the prohibition of it. He was educated with a direct view to the Service. At the age of eighteen he went to India with the reasonable assurance that a writership would soon follow him and he has ever since resided there requiring (*sic*) the knowledge and the habits suited to such an appointment. The Act it is true requires that no person shall be appointed a writer who has numbered more years than twenty two; Henry has not yet numbered twenty three and even according to the Laws of the Turf where the question of age is considered with the utmost possible acumen no horse is reckoned more than three years old, till he is full four.

With all these circumstances in favor of my friend I do earnestly hope my dear Toone that you will be able to prevail on the Court of Directors to accept your nomination of him, especially as I understand that they have in some few other instances thought themselves at Liberty to give an enlarged and liberal construction to this part of the Act of Parliament rather than a strict and literal one. All you can do in favor of Henry I am sure you will and if the poor fellow must inevitably lose the benefit of your kind intentions I have still the consolation to assure myself that they will be extended to his younger and more fortunate brother Edward and that *he* will receive your nomination. Do not conceive that I am so unreasonable as to ground these expectations on any pretensions either of Mrs. Thompson, myself or her relations. I am encouraged to entertain them solely by the generous attention which you are disposed to show to the wishes of Mr. and Mrs. Hastings. I know how much it cost them to apply to you on this occasion, nor do I believe that they could have been induced to impose this Tax on your goodness by any motive less cogent than the pious regard which they bore to the memory of their deceased friend and to the assurances they had given her. It was an effort of virtue in them to make the request and circumstanced as I know you were it was an effort of virtue in you to comply with it. I should be guilty of presumption and impertinence were I to thank either them or you for an act of kindness which in no view of it had me for its object. But I hope I may without offence for I am sure I can with great truth assert that it has increased my regard and esteem for all of you.

Mrs. Thompson was in London for a few days, she wished to have called on you at Epsom, but denied herself that pleasure from a belief that your children had never had the Hooping Cough, she having as a companion whom she could not leave behind her our second daughter Louisa, who is not yet perfectly recovered from that disorder. Present our regards to Mrs. Toone and believe me

Very sincerely yours,

GEO. N. THOMPSON.

[This copy of letter was enclosed in G. Thompson's letter to Warren Hastings, dated 27th December (1798)].

No. 82.

PENTON LODGE.

Thursday, 6 Nov. 1798.

My dear Madam,

Powney informs me that you and Mr. Hastings are in London and that

one of your motives for going thither was to see Mrs. Grindall. Swift or Rochfield has observed that in the misfortunes of our best friends we commonly find something to comfort us, and in your disappointment I am tempted to look for my own advantage. As you have not found Mrs. Grindall in London may I hope that you will come and meet her here. Our company left us to day, and Mrs. Thompson does not expect to be confined before the 20. Within this interval you will probably return to Daysford and very happy will you make us all if in your way thither you will call on us. It is presumption in mortals to talk of *Happiness*; but I think you will find a cheerful and comfortable family, and both you and Mr Hastings may enjoy the satisfaction of knowing that you have helped to render it such. I write in great haste, in the short interval between hunting and dinner, and with an attention solicited by the clamorous and importunate endearments of my dear boy and six or seven other children.

For Powney, Harry Vaneittart, and myself I received from Mr. Hastings three copies of the proceedings on his trial. The paper of *that* given to Powney differs from the paper of the other two. It seems of a superior kind. This copy has a proof instead of a print and the text is in several places corrected by Mr. Hastings's own pen. Tell him this—that if the information is of any use he may whilst in town avail himself of it. All here unite in affectionate regards both to him and yourself and I am my dear Madam with real gratitude your obliged and faithful servant.

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

[Addressed to:—]

Mrs. HASTINGS.

Thomas's Hotel,

Berkley Square,

London.

No. 83.

PENTON LODGE.

Thursday, 27th Decr. [1798.]

My dear and bond. Sir,

I write to tell you that Mrs. Thompson was safely delivered of a fine boy on Xmass Eve, or according to the computation of seamen on Xmass day, for he came into the world after 12 o'clock at noon. May God so bless the child as to make the return of the day welcome to me not only as a Christian but as a Father. He and his mother continue to do well. You may venture to congratulate me. For I am fortunate enough to think that even in these bad times large families do as well as small ones. In times almost as bad

it was little Joseph the youngest of twelve sons who saved the lives and made the fortunes not only of all his brothers but of his aged father. Upheld by this consideration I dare believe my wife will concur with me in still labouring for a younger son.

I send you the foregoing copy of a letter to show you how exactly my thoughts are in unison with yours on the subject of Toones conduct—Powney shewed me your last letter—Toone in reply to mine gave me no hopes that he could effect the appointment for *Henry* the elder brother, and I presume therefore though your letter does not say so, that the younger brother has it. Remember us most affectionately to Mrs. Hastings.

Yours gratefully,

[Unsigned.]

[Addressed to:—]

WARREN HASTINGS ESQ.,

Daylsford House.

No. 84.

PENTON LODGE.

Thursday, 17th Jany. 1799.

My dear and hon'd. Sir,

At home I never read, not because I dislike it, but because I can find no leisure for it. My regret on this account would be much more bitter than it is did I not recollect that "*Virtus in actione consistit*" and did I not accordingly speak peace to my soul by assuring it that my time is better employed in taking care of my farm and my family than in the more voluptuous improvement of my mind. It happened however about a week ago that I had an evening to pass alone at an Inn at Salisbury, and for the enjoyment of it I bought a book entitled "*British Public Characters of 1798.*" In the introduction I see that your name is mentioned as one of those which are to give value to a future volume. I tell you this that you may if you please take care of yourself. "Communications for the second volume or corrections of the first are requested to be addressed to Mr. Phillips No. 71, St. Paul's Church yard." Though the publication does not from its outset seem to promise much gratification to the malicious, yet as it treats of living characters it will probably be much read, and afford perhaps to many a man all the knowledge he will ever have of them. I wish I had knowledge or genius or industry enough to become your Biographer. But alas! whilst no man has a more exalted idea of the sublimity of the task, no man has fewer of the requisities suited to the adequate performance of it. In this respect I know myself, and you may take my word.

I failed not duly to inform you that Mrs. Thompson was safely delivered of a fine boy on Christmas Eve. I have now the pleasure to tell you and our truly good friend Mrs. Hastings that both the mother and the child have continued to do well. Mrs. Hastings and yourself have so taught me to look up to you for Acts of kindness, that upon all occasions I expect it as naturally as I do light and warmth from the blessed sun, or fatness from the clouds. To anticipate that kindness which your goodness might upon this occasion prompt you to shew me, I have to tell you that the little Fellow's Sponsors are engaged and that in homage to one of them he is to be called Christopher. Anstey, Geo. Powney, Mrs. Grindall, Ned Powney and Harry Vansittart unite with Mrs. Thompson and myself in affectionate regards to you and Mrs. Hastings and I am Dear Sir,

Yours most faithfully,

GEO. N. THOMPSON.

If Mr. and Mrs. Imhoff are with you remember us to them.

[Addressed to:—]

WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ.,

Daysford House,

Chipping Norton.

No. 85.

Copy of a Letter from Geo. Booth Tyndale, Esq., a young Solicitor in London to Mr. Thompson.

LINCOLN'S INN,

5th March, 1799.

Dear Sir,

You will oblige my Uncle Mr. Warre as well as myself by writing to Mr. Hastings on the Subject of the Letters, etc. on the other Side and when you receive his Answer to favor me with it.

I am dear Sir, etc.,

Signed. GEO. BOOTH TYNDALE.

First Enclosure in the above.

Copy of a Letter from John Tyndale Warre, Esq. to Geo. Booth Tyndale. My dear Sir,

Having waited in expectation of hearing that something might have been done relative to the late Mr. Jones's Demand upon Mr. Hastings from the Conversation I held with Mr. Thompson in 1793 I have now to request the Favour of you to see Mr. Thompson if in Town or communicate my sentiments to him and request his kind Interference. Understanding

Mr. H. is now fully competent to discharge the 200£ and Interest. I desire no more than the usual Rate of Interest from 1748 to the present time for the Money, which considering the Advantage Mr. Howard Hastings made of it I conceive not unreasonable. If you think it necessary to state any Part of the Conversation that passed between Mr. T. and myself upon this Subject I refer you to my minutes taken in 1793 which are in your Possession. I shall hope to hear from you soon, and believe me sincerely yours

Signed. JOHN TYNDALE WARRE.

VERE STREET HOTEL,

4 March, 1799.

Second Enclosure in Mr. Tyndale's Letter to Mr. Thompson.

LONDON, 18th Feby., 1793.

Mr. Hastings having been informed by Mr. Thompson of Mr. Warre's Application respecting the £200 due from the late Mr. Howard Hastings, Mr. H. desired to see all the Papers relative to the Transaction between the late Mr. H. H. and the late Mr. Chs. Jones, Mr. W. in consequence of a note from Mr. Thompson sent them for Mr. H's Inspection. The Papers were returned Mr. W. by Mr. T. in a Coach from the Mount Coffee House to Cecil Street Strand. Mr. T. declaring Mr. H's Sentiments to be that he knew the Letter dated 6th May 1748 to be the hand of his late Uncle H. H. that he would enquire into the Claims from Mr. Woodman who possesses Mr. Creswick's Papers or knew his Affairs. Mr. H. H. died perfectly solvent and there was sufficient to pay all his Debts. Mr. H. declared to Mr. T. that he should be glad to discharge the £200 whenever he had it in his power, provided the Demand appeared unsatisfied, and he would embrace the earliest opportunity of so doing but from the severe Trial he has undergone his Cash was nearly exhausted.

Mr. Thompson desired Mr. Warre to rest well contented that Mr. H. had promised him the Money should be paid as soon as he had it in his Power.

Mr. Thompson's Answer to Mr. Tyndale.

PENTON LODGE,

9th March, 1799.

Dear Sir,

Upon coming home after an Absence of some days I have received your Favour of the 5th Instant, containing Copies of Mr. Warre's Letter to you dated the 4th Inst., and of his minutes of the Conversation which passed between him and myself in 1793, relative to his Demand of a Sum of money

from Mr. Hastings. I confess the Perusal of these Papers much surprized me, as they placed the Transaction which they concerned in a Point of View different from that in which it appeared according to my Recollection of it.

From Mr. Warre's Letter to you it would seem that he has not only a legal Demand of the Principal Sum of £200 against Mr. Hastings; but that he displays some moderation in desiring "no more than the usual Rate of Interest from 1748 to the present time." From his minute of the Conversation between him and myself it would seem that Mr. Hastings through me had admitted the Demand as thus stated, and had promised to satisfy it as soon as he should have it in his power so to do.

In this View of the Subject I cannot possibly acquiesce. Upon recurring to a Diary which I have been long in the Habit of keeping I find that I also made a memorandum of my Conversation with Mr. Warre in 1793. As it throws some Light upon the minute taken by Mr. Warre I will sub-join a Copy of it for his Perusal sincerely wishing that it may afford to his Mind as much Satisfaction as it does to mine.

When at the Request of Mr. Warre I formerly undertook to lay his Claim before Mr. Hastings I had frequent opportunities of seeing that Gentleman, and I hoped that by my Interference I might save Trouble to both Parties. This Motive for my Interference exists no longer: For living, as I now do, wholly in the Country at a Distance from Mr. Hastings I have seldom the Happiness of seeing him, and consequently have no other means of communicating with him than by Letter, a means which Mr. Warre possesses as well as myself and to which I take the Liberty of referring him.

With my Compliments to Mr. Warre I remain

Dear Sir Your obedt. hble. Servt.

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

Extract from Mr. Thompson's Diary referred to in his Letter to Mr. Tyndale.

18th Feby., 1793.

"Met Mr. Tyndale Warre by his Appointment at the Mount Coffee House and returned him his Papers—telling him as my own opinion that "should Mr. Hastings upon Inquiry be convinced that the money had not been repaid, He would, if it were ever in his Power, pay to the Representatives of "Mr. Jones the principal Sum of £200; not from any Belief that "it was borrowed to send him to India, but solely from Respect to his "Uncle's Memory."

[These copies of letters were enclosed in G. Thompson's letter to Warren Hastings, dated 12th March, 1799.]

No. 86.

PENTON LODGE,

12 March, 1799.

My dear and bond. Sir,

The foregoing Letters will explain themselves, and bring to your Recollection a Transaction which has probably escaped it. Mr. Warre's Statement of it is correct as far as it is not contradicted by my Memorandum. That is, it is true you read the Papers; that you said you would consult Mr. Woodman on the Subject of them; that you expressed your Conviction that the Letter purporting to be written by Mr. Howard Hastings was in his hand writing; that he died solvent; and that if the £200 remained unpaid you would be glad to pay it whenever you should have the means of doing so. Mr. Tyndale is a worthy young man not long established as a Solicitor at Law. His Uncle Mr. Warre was a Schoolfellow of mine. But no Intimacy or Friendship has ever subsisted between us. He is a man of Fortune, and about three or four years ago succeeded to the fine House and Estate of Coplestone Warre Bamfield in Somersetshire. You will no doubt hear further from him, and you had better therefore prepare yourself with all the Information you can obtain from Woodman or elsewhere.

You see you have not yet been so long remembered as to be forgotten. The Biographiana is out and your Life is put forward to recommend the Work. I am afraid to look at it for it is probable they do not wish to do you Justice, and quite certain that they cannot if they would—You *must* do Justice to yourself, and be your own Historian. We are all well. Give our love to our dear Mrs. Hastings.

[unsigned.]

[Addressed to—]

WARREN HASTINGS ESQ.,

Daysford House,

Chipping Norton.

No. 87.

DO. HOUSE, 18th March, 1799.

My dear Thompson,

Your letter has brought to my recollection, though imperfectly, the communication which you formerly made to me of Mr. Jones's demand. I trust implicitly to your memorandum, except a slight mistake which you must have made of my words. I could not have expressed even the doubts implied by the words "not from any belief that

it was borrowed to send "him to India;" because my Uncle never had the most distant intention of such a destination. It originated with myself after my Uncle's death; and Mr. Creswicke, who was a Director of the E. I. Co., gave me his appointment of a writer, at my request so suddenly made, that it was proposed and passed almost instantaneously, all the other nominations having been previously made. This difference in the fact makes a wide one in the right deducible from it: for if my Uncle had borrowed the money for my use in fitting me out for India, I am in conscience bound to pay it: certainly not if it was borrowed for any other in which I had no concern.

I could not possibly have said (as Mr. Tyndale asserts) that Mr. Woodman had Mr. Creswicke's papers; because I am morally certain they were never in his possession.

Mr. Creswicke was my Uncle's Executor; but never gave me any account of the estate; nor is it in my present knowledge, or even belief, that I ever received any thing from it, except two houses at Cheltenham, since composing the plough Inn, which I soon after made over to my sister, Mrs. Woodman. I have reason to believe that Mr. Creswicke himself disbursed the expense of fitting me out to India. I have an indistinct recollection of an answer of his to a demand made by me of an account of his administration, in which he peevishly declared that he had paid more than he had received from the assets of the estate.

If the estate continues indebted to Mr. Jones, or any other creditor, Mr. Creswicke or his heirs are answerable for it; he was the administrator, not I; and I shall be almost inclined to put it to the conscience of Mr. Jones whether he does not know that such demand was made by his father, and whether he has ever seen or has in his possession any letters from Mr. Creswicke in answer to it; these, if he has, would place this affair in its most just light—indeed it seems improbable, and next to an impossibility, that a person in the possession of a bond for such a sum as two hundred pounds should neglect to demand payment of it from the principal, or from the known representative, and that it should lie dormant upwards of forty years, to make its appearance as a claim upon an individual, who had no original concern in contracting the debt, nor derived any benefit from it; and who perhaps has himself claims to a larger amount in the same property from which this debt ought to have been discharged.

I do not mean by what I have said to disclaim all obligation to discharge this demand; but the obligation, if any, rests on my own sense of it, as due only to my deceased uncle and to my respect to his memory. It cannot, either, in law or equity be binding on me.

Having said thus much upon the subject as it respects Mr. Jones, I must add a few words as a justification of myself, for desiring to leave this affair in its present state, for the present time and, I much fear, for ever.

[Mr. Warre has good grounds for his conclusion that "I am now fully competent to "discharge the 200£, and interest," i.e., 710£. This belief I owe to the deceptive manner in which the Directors modified their bounty to me; from which it publicly appears that they bestowed upon me an annuity of 4,000£, and a loan without interest of 50,000£. The truth is, that at this moment I am worth considerably less than nothing. My annuity is reduced to 2,000£, but of that I pay 1,000£ for interest on 20,000£ which I owed beyond the 50,000£ which they lent me to pay my debts. My Daylesford Estate (which I overrated at 500£) yields me 150£ from my tenant, and the remainder in my own possession, if rented, would produce 210£—together, 360£. Mrs. Hs. has 22,000£ which yields her an interest of 1,100£ out of which she transmits annually to her mother 200£. I owe besides 1,000£ to my bankers, and I have owing to me 3,600£, of which I can get neither principal nor Intt. I think these items leave me a clear income of 2,210£ for taxes and all expenses, with a debt of 71,000£ to discharge in December, 1813, and my annuity at the same time to cease. Now, my friend, tell me whether with such present means, and such a dreadful prospect of insolvency at the expiration of 14 years and a half, I can conscientiously, or honestly, pay the debt of another person, how dear to me soever from my obligations to him while living, especially on a claim so vague and doubtful.]

I beg your pardon, my dear Thompson, for having trespassed the limits of a single sheet; but I have had my attention withdrawn by interruption, and not a little by pain; for my wrist, hand and fingers have been crippled by rheumatism now exactly 3 weeks, and I am obliged to pause some minutes after writing a line, sometimes two, and sometimes more, or the pain becomes too acute to be borne with patience.

I have however, another letter to write to you, which shall serve for the cover to this. Observe that the paragraph included between brackets is for your own inspection only. The rest you may communicate as you please.

I thank you for the cheering intelligence in the close of your letter. Give to your dear Lady, and accept from Mrs. Hastings and myself, and from our dear children the assurance of our affectionate remembrance, and fervent wishes for the happiness of yourselves and yours.

Yr. affectionate,

WARREN HASTINGS.

No. 88.

PENTON LODGE,

3rd Octr. 1799.

My dear and bond. Sir,

Either Powney or Harry Vansittart I think must have told you that the Mumps a Disorder which is perhaps unknown to you, but which is in it's Effects much more serious than in its name was making its Progress through our Family. On the very Eve of Mrs. Thompson's intended Departure for Bisham Abbey the Disorder seized our principal Nurse maid, and fearful that it might soon attack our Children; Mrs. Thompson determined not to go from home. Though the Children as well as ourselves have hitherto escaped this Complaint, yet our youngest Boy has lately suffered so much Pain from cutting Six of his Teeth which are all advancing together that She thinks herself fortunate in being at hand to comfort and take care of him. Did I not think you possessed a Heart capable of sympathizing with us in all our Interests I should not trouble you concerning these, well knowing that they would otherwise appear to you as trifling as they are to us important. I speak of them besides to account for my not having yet received your Book. By my Directions Harry has sent it to Mrs. Grindall's House in London there to remain till I shall have an opportunity of superintending the Binding of it. These Directions were given before I received your Letter, nor have I since superseded them notwithstanding the additional motives by which I am now impelled to seek the safe and speedy Possession of the Book. I anticipate in your Address of it to me every thing that is kind in Sentiment and elegant in expression. But as you justly observe, nothing of this sort is wanting for my own Information. The Sense of your Friendship for me is constant and habitual, it forms indeed a Part and the most delightful Part of that Consciousness which tells me I exist. But though no Professions of your Regard are now necessary for my own Instruction, I do indeed highly value them as they are calculated to exalt me in the Estimation of my Descendants. It has been my Lot to have *known* only one great man: to have pleased him has gratified all the Ambition I have ever been capable of feeling, and to have my children assured upon his own Authority that such has been my proud Distinction will completely satisfy my utmost Love of Fame. In saying this I do not mean to affect Humility, or to insinuate that I am a Stranger to the *universal Passion*. I feel it, but in its utmost Purity. For "*Laudari a te,*" etc., etc. you know the Rest.

I too have harvested not only all my Wheat but all my Oats. My all of both in the most abundant Seasons is but little. In this my Wheat is

only half it's usual Quantity. My Barley is still at the mercy of the Weather.

I have been reading Lord Mornington's Letter—I like it well and I should like it better if he had ascribed the Defects of the military Establishment at Madrass to the Want of Bullocks, for such I have no doubt was the Fact. You see I can judge of no subject without considering how it affects yourself. I am glad to know from yourself that Mrs. Hastings is pretty well. A letter I received from Cheltenham led me to apprehend the contrary. Present our most affectionate Regards to her and believe me dear and hond. Sir

Yours faithfully
GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

[Addressed to—]
WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ.,
Daysford House,
Chipping Norton.

No. 89.

PENTON LODGE,
Wed., 22nd Jan'y., 1800.

My dear and hond. Sir,

Though I have long wished to *hear* of Mrs. Hastings and yourself, I know not when I should have written to you if I had not been called upon to do so by the Letter which I enclose for your perusal. I do not attempt to send you it's Substance merely, as I am convinced I could omit no Expression in it without Prejudice to it's Writer and his Object. I can however venture I believe to assure you in his name as I sincerely do in my own that We wish you first to consult your own Feelings, and if without Violence to these you can serve Mr. Porcher it is then only that We wish you to do so. If I mistake not I must before have told you, for it is a Truth familiar to me, that there is no Man on Earth whose Happiness I would promote at the Expense of your's. With this Assurance I will now venture to mention a Subject which upon my Honor I had no Intention or Thought of submitting to you when I began my Letter. I know you have now little left of the Great Man, but his Soul; and that the Power and Influence which ought to belong to you have like other worldly Goods devolved to Persons less worthy of them. I formerly addressed you in Behalf of Thomas Denton, the Brother in Law of our common Friend John White of Calcutta. He is dead and has left a Widow and five young children absolutely destitute of all Provision or the prospect of any except that which they may derive from the bounty of the Company. To this fund she has had

recourse in a petition of which I will add a copy,* sincerely hoping that you may have the power as I am sure you will the inclination to promote its success. And now my dear Sir having discharged the task of a supplicant, which, often as you have seen me in the performance of it, is still I assure you very irksome to me, let me have the pleasure of enquiring after Mrs Hastings and yourself—how are you? Does your Paradise at Daylsford continue to furnish you with new Delights? Surely they must better satisfy your souls than if you had never tasted of that Tree of Knowledge whose fruits during your late trial were so plentifully forced upon you both, by the Devil and his Agents. For my own part I can very honestly say that all I then saw of the world endears to me my present retirement. My children, my farm, and a little hunting supply me with employment ample and pleasant enough—it is only when I think of my dear babes that I ever regret my occupations are so unprofitable. Mrs. Thompson you may perhaps recollect has already presented me with two girls and two boys—relying on the bounty of that Providence which feeds the ravens, I expect the speedy coming of a fifth child without despondency. She is well and joins me in kind regards to Mrs. Hastings and yourself. I am my dear and bond. Sir

Your obliged and faithful servant

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

No. 90.

PENTON LODGE

23rd April 1800.

My dear and bond. Sir,

By a letter which I have this moment received from George Powney I find that Mrs. Hastings left London dangerously ill on Friday last in her way to Daylsford, purposing to remain at Saltbill till she should be able to prosecute the remainder of her journey. Most fervently do I hope that in this enfeebled state she has not received the melancholy news which reached me only yesterday, and which I am sure it would require her very best of health to bear. You can by this time be no stranger to it; but I comfort myself in the belief that you have hitherto been able to withhold from her the knowledge of it. Yet awhile the very praise bestowed upon his memory would but serve to aggravate her sense of her loss, and it is not therefore for her present perusal that I now send you the extract of a letter which I yesterday received from White. It may at some future time help to heal her wounded mind, and even at this time it may to your's afford motives of consolation.

* This copy is attached, but is now omitted as unnecessary.

Extract of a letter from Gno. White, Esq.,

Dated Calcutta, 3rd Oct. 1799.

"Civil changes have been few indeed in the course of the year, and
"casualties as rare, though we have had an enormously hot and oppressive
"season. Amongst the latter it grieves me to inform you of the death of
"poor Julius Imhoff in the last week. He was a worthy honest fellow,
"greatly esteemed, and as sincerely regretted. He has fallen a sacrifice to
"his sense of duty, in remaining at Midnapoor, where his active and zealous
"services were conspicuously employed in quelling insurrections, and quiet-
"ting a long neglected district, when his own personal suffering from long
"and severe indisposition required change of situation altogether. His
"illness commenced in January last when he was in the employment of Col-
"lector, and as he had no assistant to leave in charge of his office, he con-
"tinued to carry on the duties himself. In April the inactivity and negli-
"gence of the Magistrate, Gregory, induced Government to recal him; and as
"Imhoff's conduct was of different, nay opposite stamp, he was appointed to
"act judicially and magisterially, which in spite of ill health, and
"in defiance of foreboded consequences, his disorders daily increas-
"ing, he persevered in till he was ultimately compelled to
"quit the place. Alas! it was then too late. The most experienc-
"ed medical men pronounced so when they saw him, and a few days verified
"their declarations."

Surely my dear Sir it will be matter of some consolation to you that
even in the circumstances of his death he proved himself worthy of his mother
and yourself. I can from my soul affirm, as I have often done, that I never
knew a man of a more feeling heart. What White has said of him will shew
that he possessed a firm and honest one.

A letter from you if it be but a line will help to relieve the anxiety and
apprehensions with which I shall regard your total silence. That God may
bless you in the preservation of her without whom in this world there can I
know be no blessing for you is the ardent wish of dear sir

Your obliged and faithful servant,

Geo. NESBITT THOMPSON.

[Addressed to:—]

WARREN HASTINGS Esq.,

Daylsford House,

Chipping Norton.

No. 91.

PENTON LODGE,

Tuesday, 10 July 1800.

My dear and bond. Sir,

It will be a fortnight to-morrow since Mrs. Thompson presented me with one of the stoutest girls I believe that ever was born. The midwife says that children at their birth commonly weigh between eight and nine pounds: This she conceived weighed full fifteen. Mrs. Thompson and the child I thank God have both continued to do well, except only that I have not yet been able to find a Nurse with milk enough for the infant. I am now going in search of one, to supersede her whom I have already procured. Urgent however as is the nature of this business, I suspend it whilst I write to you upon yours. Shawe has summoned me to London to identify Nobkissen's Bond and to prove where and when I found it. I have looked amongst my papers for evidence of this fact but can find none.

I have copies of two letters which I wrote to you by the *Ravenworth* one dated 18th September the other 26 September 1787. The first was accompanied by an enclosure No. 2 being a list of some private papers which I had found in your chest and which according to the second I sent you by Mr. Young who went passenger on the *Ravenworth*. Of the enclosures I have unluckily no copy. If you have the letters let me request that you will turn to them and see if the list No. 2 is amongst them. It would give me infinite satisfaction to find that it made mention of Nobkissen's Bond.

At present I can only say "that you had written to me to look for Nobkissen's Bond; that I perfectly well remember that I found many of your private papers; that I sent them to you; and that I *believe* Nobkissen's Bond was amongst them." I wish you could assist my recollection, and I shall be much obliged to you if between this and Sunday next you will at all events write to me on the subject directing your letter to be left for me at Mr. Shawe's. I shall be there next Monday evening.

I hope to hear that Mrs. Hastings and yourself are well, and that she brrs the sad tidings of her loss with as much firmness as tenderness. Remember me to her affectionately and believe me

Your obliged and grateful servant

[Addressed to:—]

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

WARREN HASTINGS Esq.,

Dorants Hotel,

German St.

St. James's London.

No. 92.

*Wills Coffee Ho, Serle Street,
LINCOLNS INN,
Friday, 18th July 1800.*

My dear and hond. Sir,

The liberality with which you decline my humble services gives you the better claim to them, and if possible encreases my desire of rendering them to you. I have always thought that he must be a torpid wretch indeed who could know you intimately and not catch a little of your disinterestedness. It is not saying enough of you to assert merely that of all human beings you are the least selfish.

If the papers are found I had better be a witness of their discovery that as such you may have the benefit of my evidence. Besides that I think I may contribute to the success of your search, or lessen at least the trouble of it.

You will probably receive this to-morrow so that I shall confidently expect to receive a letter from you on Monday morning. Let it tell me only whether you abide or not by your intention of setting out for Daysford on Sunday. If you do, I will please God be with you there either on Tuesday night or early on Wednesday morning. I allow myself this latitude because I rely on the public stages for my conveyance. When you return from Daysford I shall hope to tempt you by the way of Penton. Such you see is my disinterestedness. If the letter which I expect on Monday tells me that from any cause you have deferred your visit to Daysford I shall then go home immediately. I rejoice to find that my truly dear and valuable friend and patroness already receives benefit from Bathing, and am sorry to be any ways instrumental in robbing you of the pleasure of watching her recovery, and of contributing to it by your presence. That God may bless you both is my Dear Sir the fervent wish of

Your obliged and grateful servant,
GEO NESBITT THOMPSON.

PENTON LODGE,
22nd Sept. 1800.

No. 93.

My dear and hond. Sir,

The reports which I have received of your health do not satisfy me. I find that you are still afflicted with the pain in your head. It is the last part about you except your heart that I should have expected to be the seat of pain, conceiving that the perfect organisation of both would have excluded it. But of these matters we know very little. That intellectual Creature

Pope lived with a constant head ach, and I dare say you recollect many more instances of the same sort than I do.

When I was in London I read your letter to Shaw with a full conviction of all the truths it was intended to establish. But "*the Law is the perfection of Reason,*" and as I have never attained to this perfection, it is no wonder that I am incapable of discerning the principles by which it supersedes the dictates of common sense.

You forgot or omitted to leave with me your additions to Mr. Austey's Poem on Contentment, and the recipe for preserving Potatoes. Of the latter I remember the outlines. The Potatoes are to be treated like apples—with this difference that of the apples you preserve the juice, and of the potatoes the pulp.

Now to business—Towards many men your relation, Heaven knows, is strangely changed. Between us it remains the same. You are still the patron and I am still the client. Were I to paint Bellisarius, his dog should still be looking up at him with undiminished ardour of attachment, and eagerness of expectation. Henry Powney you know was to have had the writership which Col. Toone so generously left at the disposal of Mrs. Hastings and yourself but being too old by two months to take it, it devolved upon his younger and more fortunate brother Edward. It is now above six years since Henry has resided in India. Soon after his arrival there he went to his elder brother George at Ramnad where he applied himself with great diligence to business and to the study of the Languages of the Country. Soon after our late acquisition of Ceylon he was engaged by Frederick North in the Service of the Company at that Place, and Frederick North it seems has strongly recommended him to the Court of Directors for a permanent Employment. Toone tells me that the Fate of this Recommendation will principally rest with the two Chairs, and it is to request your Interest with Inglis, and with him only that I now trouble you. Understand also that if for any Reason you feel a Difficulty in applying to him on this occasion, it is my earnest Wish that you will decline doing so. I have often said and always with truth that there is no Person living whose Welfare I would promote at the Expense of your Peace. Remember us most affectionately to Mrs. Hastings. She as well as yourself will be glad to know that Mrs. Thompson and our Children are well. For my own Part I continue to have many "*Monitors which feelingly persuade me what I am,*" but whilst they remind me of my mortality, they make me rejoice in it. My sweet Boy who is at my Elbow forbids the Indulgence of this Sentiment; for his Sake and that of his Brothers and Sisters I ought contentedly to bear the Load of Life as long as I can be useful in lessening the Weight of theirs, or

contributing to the Strength and Fortitude by which they are to sustain the Burthen of it. I am Dear Sir most truly yours

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

Remember us to the Imhoffs.

[Addressed to—]

WARREN HASTINGS, Esq.,
Daylsford House,
Chipping Norton.

No. 94.

PENTON LODGE,
10th April 1801.

My dear and hond. Sir

I have just now received your Letter of the 8th and infinite is the Happiness which it affords me. Amongst the many Sins Negligencies and Ignorances with which I have to reproach myself none has lately laid with heavier oppression on my Heart than my long Neglect of you. I have owed you a Letter ever since November last—I at first delayed to write it to you not because I had little to say but because I had much. Delays are indeed Dangerous—and for this reason especially that if once yielded to their Dominion is not afterwards easily disputed—Indolence comes to their aid, and such is the painful Sort of Sleep in which that half torpifying Devil has laid my Soul, that whilst I have felt the Weight which lay so heavy on my Breast, and knew the Means of removing it, I have not had the Power to use them—Your Letter has awakened me, not by Reproaches but by a Voice as kind as that with which Adam dispersed the distressful Dreams of Eve. Others talk of the Principles of Christianity—you practise them—and are amongst the very few who return good for evil.

Though I know not who may reap, I am willing to sow. We cannot continue to live at Penton—I am not ashamed of this, but Mrs Thompson feels so much Humiliation in the Idea, that I am not sure she would pardon me, for imparting it even to you—Keep it to yourself and assist me if you can in procuring a Purchaser for my Property. It certainly has much to recommend it. A good House in a crowded Neighbourhood, only 67 miles from London and 45 from Bath—with all its excellent Furniture; 150 Acres of Land of different Tenures, Farming Stock of every Description, with the Crops upon the Ground would all come within the Price of fifteen thousand Pounds. To apply however the Doctrines of Krishun, I will use this Place as if I was to live here for ever, and I therefore repeat that I will sow whoever is to reap. Be so kind as to send me three Bushels if you can spare as much of your Barley Wheat, and direct that it may be forwarded to me from

London by Cook's Salisbury Coach, which sets out every day at 2 o'clock from the Belle Savage Ludgate Hill. How many Bushels of this Grain do you sow to an Acre? of the Common Barley we here allow 5 Bushels.

Not to lose a Post I write in great Haste. It is indeed to be lamented that whilst the Vessel of our State is in so much Danger, you should be confined to your Cabin—yet I wonder that you can bear to go upon Deck, and as a Passenger merely to behold the Folly Rashness and Wickedness of those to whom it's Safety has been so long and so unhappily committed—for the late Change is but a Change of the Watch, and not of the Officers.

I rejoice that Mrs Hastings enjoys good Health—Assure her that I shall never forget the generous Patronage with which She honoured me. To her am I indebted not only for her own Friendship but in great Measure for your's also. Mrs. Thompson and our Children I thank God are well, and I am Dear Sir

most truly yours
GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

[Addressed to:—]

WARREN HASTINGS ESQ.
Daylesford House
Chipping Norton

No. 95.

NO. 69, LOWER GROSVENOR STREET
Tuesd. 2d Feby. 1802

My dear and bond. Sir

I came to Town two or three days ago upon the Business of an Estate to which I am Executor, and in Consequence of a Cold am now confined to my Room by a slight Fever. I do not know that I should now have written to you, were it not to tell you that in a Parcel of Books which Becket is sending you I have enclosed one that you left at Penton—namely your Proposal for establishing a Persian Professorship at one of the Universities—A Proposal which seems to comprehend almost all the Good of that coming from the Marquis of Welseley without its Expense and Inconveniences. Were I fond of being my own Historian, I should not have lost the only occasion which I ever have of being such, but should have duly informed you long before this time that Mrs Thompson was safely delivered of another fine Boy on the 1st of January—this being our third Son and our Sixth Child. If we go on thus I shall not "*be ashamed to speak with my Enemy in the Gate*"—of the Kings Bench: for such a Family will be a plausible Pretext at least for getting there. It is paradoxical that We should take Liberties with Things in Proportion as We revere them; but the Fact is that I have ventured with Mrs Thompson's

heartly Consent to invest our last Boy with the honoured names of *Warren Hastings*. You have nothing to pay for it. The Priest blessed the Boy with this gratifying Benediction—"May he be as great a Man as his Godfather." Don't be angry—Consider I have nothing to offer you but my Children. I had indeed four other great Men to choose out of—Lord Thurlton Buonaparte Nelson and Sir Sidney Smith. Those who know you thoroughly and my Obligations to you will on no Principle condemn my Choice. My Stay here must in some measure depend on the Continuance of my Indisposition—if it leaves me within these two Days I shall hope to be at home again within ten. Present my grateful Remembrances to my Friend and Benefactress Mrs Hastings and believe me

Dear and bond. Sir

Your infinitely obliged and faithful Servant

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

No. 96.

No. 69. LOWER GROSVENOR STREET

Saturday [Postmark 1802.]

My dear and bond. Sir

The Business which principally brought me to London was that of my late Friend Davies. Whilst here I have also employed myself in looking into the Concerns of poor Turner. We cannot find any Will subsequent to the one which He made upon leaving India—Under this his Property after the Payment of a few Legacies will all go as I conceive to his natural Son. In his Pocket Book was found a Paper in his own hand writing without either date or Signature which was in my opinion the Sketch or Plan of the Will which I have above mentioned. But to ascertain whether this Paper should have any operation in modifying or explaining his Will, and to instruct us as to the manner in which we ought to prove the Will and to act under it We have prepared a Case for the Consideration of two great Chancery Lawyers. This Case contains a full Statement of the Will, and the unsigned Paper; of the Situation, and amount of his Property at the time he made his Will, at the time of his Death, and at present; and every Question that can arise upon these Facts is submitted to the Consideration of the Council. I have directed a Copy of the Case and of the Opinions to be sent to you—In the meantime it may be proper for me to add that your Name is not mentioned in the Will, and that in the unsigned Paper it is only mentioned as the devisee of his Thibet Papers. His Executors in India are White and a Mr Martyn, and his Executors in England are Mr. Sadler Mr. Wroughton and myself.

I am very glad to find that you are coming to Town, as I hope I shall have the Pleasure of seeing you before my Departure hence.

I beg you will present my Complts. to Mr. & Mrs. Woodman and that you will believe me most truly yours

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

[Addressed to:—]

WARREN HASTINGS ESQ.

at

Jno. Woodman's Esq.

Ewell

Surrey.

No. 97.

PENTON LODGE

17 May 1802

My dear and hon'd. Sir

Upon leaving Daylsford I met Mr Penmiston's Mare, and prudently as you will think declined the Purchase of her. I got to Shrewsbury that Night, and to Chirk Castle the next morning. Tell my dear Mrs. Hastings that I am now better acquainted than I was with Mrs Biddulph, and can pronounce her to be not equivocally a good *Sort* of Woman, but positively a good one—Such a Woman as would be a valuable Wife did She bring with her no other Dowry than her amiable Dispositions. But in Addition to these She has made Biddulph the Lord of a noble Mansion, an extensive Estate, and numerous Dependants. The Property is no Doubt incumbered, but in its great *Capability* of Improvement it possesses the ample means of speedily liberating itself. It is indeed a highly interesting Country—Nature reigns there in all her Dignity, but not to the Preclusion of Art. The noblest Aqueduct certainly in England if not in the World carries a Canal across the lovely Valley of Llangollen—The Forges smoke amongst the Mountains—and whilst the Miners are toiling within the Bowels of the Earth, an industrious Peasantry are not only laboriously but skilfully cultivating its Surface. I do not wonder at the proud Attachment of Welshmen to their native Soil. A single View of their Country has made me discontented with the Tameness of my own. On my Return I dined with Jonathan Scott at Shrewsbury—a man whom I have always loved for the Singleness of his Heart and the Simplicity of his manners—His Business seems to be the Education of his Daughter, the only *original Work* with which his Labors have ever presented him. He seems to regret the little Success that has attended his *Translations*, and laments that at Shrewsbury he has not a single Soul with whom He ~~can~~ communicate on the Subjects which have so long employed his Thoughts. It is possible my dear Sir that you may help to make this good little Man useful and happy. Upon coming to Oxford I dined with the learned Dr. White

Professor of Arabic and Hebrew, and Canon of Christ Church—I found him ambitious too of being useful in his Office if not in his Generation. In his Desire of promoting Oriental Literature in general, he is solicitous of forming an Establishment at Oxford for teaching the Persian Language—To this End all he wants are Funds for the Payment of an Englishman as a Professor, and of one Mahomedan as his Assistant. From three to Five hundred a Year he thinks would be sufficient to pay them both. He thinks the very success of the Attempt would depend upon the Character of the Man who is to be first made the Professor—and little Jonathan, a Name honorable in Hebrew Lore and perhaps therefore dear to the Doctor is the Man of his Choice—Jonathan with a Humility which becomes him is willing to accept the Office even at the very low Salary which the Doctor thinks of annexing to it. To you I need say nothing in favor of the Attempt. It meets your early Proposal, and avoids the Expense attending the splendid Establishment of Lord Walseley. It furnishes too to the Directors an opportunity of proving to the World, that in rejecting his Lordships Plan they were really actuated by a necessary Regard to Economy and not by a culpable Disregard for Literature or the Qualifications of their Servants. You will see that the use of the Moonshy is principally to teach the Pronunciation. I write in Haste, having always too little to do, to do anything leisurely and properly—But I shall have done enough if I have succeeded in recommending the Subject to your Attention. In your maturing Mind it will receive all the Improvement and Effect of which it is capable.

Remember us to Mrs. Hastings and the Imboffs.

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

[Addressed to:—]

WARREN HASTINGS ESQ.

Farm Street

John Street

Berkeley Square

London.

No. 98.

PENTON LODGE

Friday 30th July 1802.

My dear Madam

Mrs Grindall arrived here a few days ago. Amongst the Schemes which She and her Sister have formed for the Improvement of the Happiness which they enjoy in each other's Company is that of securing to themselves, the Pleasure of your's and Mr. Hastings's. They both remember with Thankfulness the repeated Invitation you have given them to Daylsford and they are

now so fortunate as to be able to avail themselves of it. If perfectly convenient to you to receive them they will be with you on Thursday next by Tea Time. They purpose dining at Oxford. Their Party will consist of themselves, the two Miss Grindalls, one Maid and one Man Servant. They have allotted a Week to this delightful Visit, and about the Close of it Henry Vansittart will perhaps pay his Respects to you for a day or two. I am myself to stay at home to superintend the Nursery and the Farm. They have fixed so remote a day for waiting on you that you may have full time either to decline or accept their Company, which they earnestly request you will do as shall best suit your Convenience. You may tell Mr. Hastings that I do indeed behold with Indignation the different Treatment which He and Lord Wellesly receive from our leading Men. But Sensations of this Sort I should no longer feel could the Frequency of their Recurrence have blunted my Perception of them. But my Feelings upon every thing that concerns my much honoured Patron are as acute as ever. Reflection only serves to heighten my Love of him, and my bitter Detestation of the Villains high and low open and concealed who have concurred in rewarding his unexampled Patriotism, his important Services with Poverty Neglect Calumny and Persecution. This World certainly is not made for him. There must of Course be another and a better. All my Reasonings about him terminate in this Conclusion and I confess it is the only consolatory one they afford me. Pray give him the enclosed Bank Note and beg the Favor of him to employ it in procuring for me some of the *Sheep's Fescue Grass*. It grows in greater Abundance and less mixed with other Grasses under the Walls of the new Inclosures about Addlestrop Downs than I have seen it elsewhere. I hope He will be able to send it to me by Mrs Thompson on her Return. We are all well and unite in kind Regards to Mr Hastings and yourself. If Miss Payne is with you remember us to her and believe me Dear Madam

Your infinitely obliged and faithful hble. Servant

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON

[Addressed to:—]

Mrs. HASTINGS

Daylsford House

Chipping Norton

No. 99.

PENTON LODGE

1st Octr. 1802

My dear and hon'd. Sir

Your last four Letters are now lying before me. 'Though they were all written solely to accomplish my Wishes, and to promote the Happiness of

myself and my Friends yet have I not had the Grace to thank you for one of them. It is because I love and reverence you that I have thus neglected you. If I had thought you to be as other Men are, proud, captious, and prone to Suspicion; had I not known it was by the pure example of your own Heart that you judged the Hearts of other Men I should not have dared to have left you such ample Motives to question the Gratitude of mine. But it is not of the Truth that We are best convinced that we are most anxious to establish the Proofs. Assured in my Soul of my high Regard for you, I feel no more Necessity of proving it than I do the Love which I bear myself; and next to myself you are consequently the Man whom upon many occasions I have most neglected.

My Paper has not given the Proceedings upon the late Disposal of the Nabobship of the Carnatic with any Regularity. But I have seen enough of them to know how to apply your very apt Quotation from Juvenal, and to confirm me in the Truth of an observation which I myself made in an early Period of your Trial. You were offered up a spotless Sacrifice and Propitiation not only for all the offences that ever had been committed in India, but for all that were to follow. You have redeemed the lost Character of Indians, and are become the Sanctuary to which as to the Altar of a slaughtered Saint real Culprits will in future fly for Safety. Who will henceforth believe the Delinquency of Indians, or hear but with Indignation of their Impeachment?

I received the two Bags of Grass Seed with all Thankfulness, but not till so long after their Dispatch, that the Plants which they contained were almost dead. I am in hopes however of saving them. I have read with the most minute Attention all you have said upon the Subject of cultivating the Grass Seeds and am so thoroughly convinced of the Truth of that Doctrine which you call *your own* that I am determined implicitly to follow it. The Piece of Land which I wish to lay down adjoins my Lawn and resembles it in Quality. The Herbage of the Lawn is in general very sweet, but one Part of it is so particularly grateful to the Cattle, that, though it has been for these two Months past eaten down closer than that of a Bowling Green, they all, Sheep Cows and Horses continue to resort to it several times in every day. This Herbage I intend to reserve for Seed, thresh it as soon as it is ripe, and sow it's Produce in August without any other Grain whatever. My Attention in the mean time will be equally directed to both Pieces of Land, so that the one may produce an Abundance of good Seed, and the other be in the best possible condition to receive it. The Fescue I shall also sow as you advise, by itself, and on a Spot suited to its Growth.

The Party returned from Daylsford enamoured of its Beauty, and thankful for all the Attentions they received there—but not without some Portion of Remorse—They entered your House like "Thieves in the Night"; and

though they departed in the Morning it was not altogether with a Change of Character—For upon their Arrival here they found to their great Mortification that the Servant had packed up two of Mrs. Hastings's Music Books with those of the young Ladies—The one is a Psalm Book, the other Birds Hindostanny Airs. When I go to London which I fear I must do very soon I will deliver them to Becket so that he may forward them to you with his first Packet. Mrs Grindall and her Family are at the Isle of White (*sic*). When We last heard from Powney He was at Geneva. We I thank God are all well. Your favourable opinion of my dear Marian is highly gratifying to me—I will endeavour to render her in all things deserving of it, and worthy of the Honor She received when Mrs Hastings became her Godmother—She unites with Mrs Thompson and myself in the most affectionate and grateful Remembrance of Mrs Hastings and yourself, and I am Dear Sir most truly yours

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON

If Mrs Motte is still with you, present to her our kind Regards.

[Addressed to:—]

WARREN HASTINGS ESQ.

Daylsford House.

No. 100.

PENTON LODGE

Mond. 18 July 1803

My dear and hon'd. Sir

The Kindness I have invariably received both from Mrs Hastings and yourself convinces me that nothing which much concerns me will be quite indifferent to either of you, and therefore though the Event has nothing very extraordinary in it I think it worth while to tell you that Mrs Thompson was on last Thursday Sent., the 7th, safely delivered of a very fine Boy, and that both She and the Infant have ever since continued to do well—She came down Stairs within the Week, and He went out undaunted by the Fear of Invaders when He was only four days old. All this is well, and I do most sincerely thank God for it. But considering the present State of Europe, it is hardly enough that English Women should produce "*Men Children only*," they should bring them into the World like the Progeny of Cadmus, complete Warriors with Arms in their Hands. Even this I fear would be insufficient to defend us against the Enthusiasm of the French and the extraordinary Talents of their Leader unless the upper Ranks in Society can contrive to excite the Patriotism, and call forth the Energies of those below them, and unless these powerful Principles when awakened are committed to the Disposal and Direction of a higher Species of Intelligence, of a more exalted Genius than that of our high born and royal Commander in Chief. A Gentleman who called on me a few

days ago was struck by the Intelligence expressed in your Bust. I told him and upon my Honor most truly, that there was not in my Opinion a man in England so fit to be placed at the Head of a Military Council as yourself—I shortly told him what you had done when surprized at Benares, and I repeated to him the only but emphatic Words which Popham uttered when He came out from that Conference in which you had given him your Plan and Instructions for the Attack of all Chiet Singa Forts at once. They were these—“*He should have been a General.*” Buonoparte is not a Man to be opposed by ordinary Means. It is the Poet which makes the Critic and not the Critic the Poet. Buonoparte is constantly enlarging the military Code. His Movements suggested by the Spur of the Occasion and adapted most minutely to its Exigencies will hereafter probably for duller Men become the settled Rules of War; but to anticipate them in their Conception and to counteract them at the very moment of their Birth requires Talents powerful energetic and creative as his own. Were you to direct our military operations and Sir Sidney Smith in Preference to every other Man in England to execute them, Apprehensions which I feel for the Safety of my Wife and Children and for the Honor of my Country would not be so painful as I confess they now sometimes are. The lower orders of my Countrymen are bold and generous, but they have been so much abused in the late shameful War into which they were so wickedly trappanned for the Restoration of the Bourbons, and all the horrible Corruptions of France that they are now become insensible to the true condition of their own Country. We were yesterday to consider the Proposals and Plan which have been circulated for the Defence of the Realm. None of the neighbouring Parishes have yet been able to do anything effectual for the Purpose. The Inhabitants of this Village I found cold suspicious and very unwilling to assemble—I at length however got them together, and before We parted had the Satisfaction of seeing them almost mad with patriotic Enthusiasm. I hope I shall hear from you, and that you will tell me that both Mrs Hastings and yourself are well—I beg you will present my kind Regards to her, and assure her that I shall never forget my great Obligations to her. I very often lament that We are not nearer Neighbours. As I advance in Life I find myself less disposed and less qualified for the Formation of new Friendships—I of course relinquish with the greater Reluctance the delightful Intercourse of old ones. How and where are Mr and Mrs Imhoff? Have you heard anything of Sir Elijah? I am sure I wearied you when I was in London with my Visit. When I think how ardently I sought Admission to you, and how little I had to say to you when I obtained it I am almost ashamed of myself—Unless you made large Allowances for the Effects of early Attachment and old Habits, unless the Fulness of the Heart can compensate for all other Deficiencies, you must have some-

times thought me frivolous and troublesome Remember however that when India was at your Disposal, I valued your Company beyond every thing else you had to give.

[unsigned]

[Addressed to:—]

WARREN HASTINGS Esq.
Daylesford House
Chipping Norton.

No. 101.

PENTON LODGE

Friday 11 Novr. 1803

My dear and Hon'd Sir

I cannot tell you how thankful I am for your truly kind Letter. I take such a Share in your Virtues that instead of feeling myself humbled by your Superiority I am even proud of it—Were not this the Case I should be mortified to find that in inquiring after my Condition you had anticipated a Design which I had long formed, and too long deferred of inquiring after your's; but I am delighted to find myself thus kindly remembered in spite of omissions which were calculated either to render me forgotten, or thought of only with Reprehension.

I had indeed seen in the Papers a Report of Saadut Ally's offer to you—But this though it did honor both to himself and Lord Welsley fell so far short of my Idea of your Pretensions, that I could not bring myself to congratulate you upon it; especially too as I foresaw that to give full Effect to the generous Intentions of this Foreigner, this Follower of Mahomed you would be again compelled to taste the Insolence and Ingratitude of some of your Christian Countrymen and the selfish Indifference at least of their most sanctified and pious Sovereign. When I was in India I wished to procure for you some Donation of this Kind, not merely for it's pecuniary Importance, but as an unquestionable Proof of the Regard of the Donors. The Wish was confined to my own Breast; and if I can rely upon my Recollection I found it opposed in Embryo, by a new Law, which whilst I read it, I exclaimed was made entirely though covertly against you—I can not find it amongst the few Acts in my Possession—Does any such Law exist—or have I been dreaming?

I am glad to find that you do not think Buonaparte will come—For if you would find the Attempt impracticable *He* probably will—You are however the *only* Man in England of whom I can say so much—When ordinary Men deride the Project, I say it is the way in which all little Minds have invariably contemplated the Designs of great ones. I live amongst Unbelievers—My Faith is however better calculated to make us whole than their

Incredulity. I do not think that the Invasion of England will now form the *principal* Part of his Attack—It will however be made in such a manner as to aid his greater Objects, to save his Credit with his Troops, and surrounding Nations, and to do us an Infinity of mischief—But I am so vulnerable with a wife and seven Infant Children, that my Fears perhaps are Father of these Thoughts. Individually I should even thank him for his Threats, since they have called forth a glorious Spirit in the Country, and though they may not retard the Decline of our Empire will I trust give Glories to it's Setting. Under such a Prince as Alfred it would have done both. What a People—if they had but Rulers worthy of them. I have written this since I came home from hunting—for I am still an idle Fellow. I made two Attempts to raise a Corps of Cavalry, but both failed—though the Marquis of Winchester offered himself for the Command of the first, and Tom Smith a young Man of great Expectations, for the second. We are all well. Give our love to Mrs Hastings—and to Imhoff too. God for ever bless you all.

G. N. THOMPSON.

[Addressed to:—]

WARREN HASTINGS Esq.
Daysford House
Chipping Norton.

No. 102.

PENTON LODGE
19 Octr 1804

My dear and Hon'd Sir

Your Letter of the 19th came this Morning, and it was the first of all your Letters which I ever opened with more of Fear and Trembling than of Confidence and Joy. I knew I had sinned against you and I dreaded your Rebuke in Proportion as I was sure it would be milder than my Offence. Dog as I am—I received your Letter of the 21st of Sept^r. I am not however without Palliations of my apparent Neglect. The moment it came to hand I begun my Search for the Papers which could best enable me to ansure it. My Search continued at Intervals for two or three days but without finding them. Unwilling to treat the Subject without the Lights which these Papers would shed on it, I deferred the Discussion of it in hopes of finding them. Delays are dangerous, other Concerns broke in upon me—My Bankers broke, and had nearly plundered me of Ten thousand Pounds of another Person's Money; as it happened I most fortunately lost only about £280 of my own. To him that *hath* shall be given, you have verified the remaining and more unintelligible Part of the Sentence as well as myself. Next I was obliged to go from home for nearly one Week, Our Fair then came, and occupied my time for

almost the whole of another. Besides which I have been obliged to ride many Miles in Pursuit of a Wet Nurse for a little Creature who will probably come into the World crying for one within these few days. These Circumstances will I hope mitigate my Offence, though I am convinced they do not wholly excuse it—Pardon me.

I have just now hastily committed to Paper the Heads of a Letter which if you choose you may write to Mr Warre. I am myself however a poor Creature and so afraid of Disgrace that I should probably pay the £200. My Conscience however does not permit me positively to advise your doing so. Though I cannot find any Copies of my Letters to Mr Warre I am so thoroughly confident of the Impressions under which I wrote them that you may safely call for their Production. I am going Nine Miles to Dinner, and have sent four for a Frank. If it comes Mrs Thompson will give you the Benefit of it. If not let the double Postage add to Mr Creswick's Sins and not to mine. Mrs Thompson is well. Her *Yoke* perhaps is not easy, but her *Burthen*, large as it is, is light, so well does She bear it. Her Brother George is here. They both send their kind Regards to you and join me in those which I heartily offer to my dear Friend Mrs Hastings. All our Seven Children I thank God are well. Harry the Eighth, or rather the first is at Deal, serving his Country in the Militia, and most patriotically with great Sacrifice of his Pleasures.

I am most faithfully your's

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

[Addressed to:—]

WARREN HASTINGS ESQ.

Daysford House.

No. 103.

PENTON LODGE,

Thursd. 8 Novr. 1804

My dear and hond Sir

It is not by your Virtues that you will ever be able to astonish me. I know that Patience Long-suffering and Forgiveness are amongst the Number of them, and I am therefore not at all surprized to find that my Faults instead of drawing down your Censure on me, have only induced you to blame yourself—so true it is that the wise and good are always more lenient to the Faults of others than to their own. But though I am not surprized at your Excellencies, I confess I am at any thing like an Error or Deficiency. How could *you* be ignorant that Taunton was in *Somersetshire* or fail to find it in any of your Maps when Cary even in his little one of that Country has not only laid it down but Hestercumb also?

Your Comments upon Mr C. Jones's Letter to Mr Stratton has I confess altered my Opinion of it. Your Reasoning however very much depends upon the Fact whether Mr Creswicke was or was not living when the Father communicated with his Son. If he was living why did they not both apply to him? That He had Assets for the Payment of this Debt seems evident from your succeeding to the Houses at Cheltenham unless indeed they came to you under an *Entail*. But I write in Haste, and if I had Leisure it is not probable that I should be able to afford you any new Lights upon a Subject which you have so well considered. I am not only the Tutor of my Children, but their Playmate, and they have almost all been here in Succession to tell me that I must make Haste and come out, for that it is getting late. On last Tuesd. Fortnight Mrs Thompson added another to these delightful Cares, these careful Delights. She was then safely delivered of another Son and both have ever since continued to do well. We have now five Boys and three Girls. The God who has fed their Father and who feeds the Ravens will I trust in his Mercy take Care of them.

Poor Mrs Rawlins, the amiable Sister of Mrs Thompson died early this year in Child Bed, leaving Six Children. Tom Powney her Brother who went a Writer to Bengal about 10 years ago arrived a few days ago with the three oldest of them. They are all now here on their Way to London. Tom came home partly to recruit his Health, and partly to take Charge of these poor Children, their Father not being able to leave India at present without great Injury to his Concerns and consequently to their Welfare. Mrs Thompson and her Brother unite in kind Regards to Mrs. Hastings and yourself and I am my dear Sir

most truly and gratefully Yours
GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

[Addressed to:—]

WARREN HASTINGS Esq.
Daylsford House,
Chipping Norton.

No. 104.

PRENTON LODGE.
5 Decr. 1804.

My dear and Good Sir

You cannot be more tired of reading Apologies for my Silence than I am of making them. In Procrastination I am absolutely incorrigible, for I sin not only against the constant Admonitions of my Conscience but in spite of the bitter Pangs with which it incessantly punishes my Delinquency. Shenstone's Division of Mankind can alone account for my Conduct—He says

the World may be divided into People who read, People who write, People who think and Fox Hunters—I am in the latter Class—and it is chiefly that I am writing to Night.

I cannot conceive that your Payment of Mr Jones's Demand would *in Law* subject you to the Payment of all the other Debts of your deceased Uncle, and were there anything which in *Honor and Conscience* made this a Debt of peculiar and distinguished obligation on you I think it would be too much in the Spirit of that subtle Casuist Edmund Burke to refuse the Payment of it lest other Creditors of inferior Note should think themselves agrieved by your Partiality. But the Pretexs under which it has been attempted to make you responsible for this Claim are to your own certain Knowledge false. They can of course in your Mind add nothing to its Sanctity—If they were false also to the Knowledge or Belief of those who used them *this is* perhaps of all your Uncles Debts the least entitled to your Consideration. It became Mr Jones who was called upon by Mr Creswick to state his Debt, to look after the Payment of it, and if he was in truth the Friend of Mr Howard Hastings it was his Duty under the Right which He possessed as a Creditor to call for an Account of his Estate, and in prosecuting his own Claim to have protected the Interests of two orphan Infants. There certainly does not appear in Conscience any great Obligation upon either of those orphans to indemnify Mr Jones for an Indulgence to Mr Creswick by which probably they were the greatest Sufferers. Further Inquiry however will probably throw further Lights upon the Subject—In the mean time I would Advise you to impart to Mr Warre such as you at present possess, and to repeat to him in Substance all I am sure that you are at present pledged for, namely, that if you shall be convinced that the Money was in truth borrowed to send you to India, and that it has never been paid, you will when your Circumstances shall permit repay the Principal Sum of £200.

I should be still less satisfied than I am with the very imperfect View which I have taken of the Subject were I not convinced that you will want no Assistance to see it in its proper Light—It is one of those matters about which, if I recollect rightly, Solomon says a Man's own Mind will tell him more than Seven Men upon a Watch Tower. I have always been more anxious for your good Name, than for your Wealth, and I have always had the Satisfaction of seeing you doing everything to promote the one though I have very often beheld you extremely negligent of the other.

Mrs Thompson and our Eight Children are well. Henry is still with the Berkshire Militia. Thomas Powney one of Mrs Thompson's Brothers is lately returned from Bengal, partly for the Restoration of his Health, and partly to bring home three Infant Daughters of his deceased Sister Mrs Rawlins. I last Week saw Mr and Mrs Imhoff at Wallop, both in high Health and Beauty.

Mrs Thompson unites with me in affectionate Regards to Mrs Hastings and I am my dear Sir your obliged and faithful Servt

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

[Addressed to:—]

WARREN HASTINGS ESQ.
Daysford House
Chipping Norton.

No. 105.

PRENTON LODGE.
Tuesd. 30 April 1805

My dear and hon'd Sir

For nothing in my opinion is the use of Letters more desirable than for the Means it gives us of communicating with our absent Friends. This Enlargement of our natural Faculties, this humble Approach to ubiquity is a Privilege which few Men value more highly than I do, and of which probably no man more shamefully neglects the Exercise. Though a Day seldom passes in which I do not think of you with unabated Affection and Esteem, yet have I suffered many Months to elapse with no more Intercourse between us than if We were Inhabitants of different Planets, or Savages on the Face of this, divided by impassible Wastes or by the insurmountable Obstacles of brutal Ignorance. It is long since I have been able to consider public Men or public Measures without a Reference of both to yourself. You may perhaps remember that I have invariably considered Dundass as the main though secret Spring of your Persecutions, and you will therefore perhaps not be shocked that I rejoice in his Diagrace. "Even handed Justice has returned the "poisoned Chalice to his own Lips." I like to behold Heaven thus justifying it's Ways to Men. The moral Turpitude of the offence for which Lord Melville now suffers perhaps does not justify all the Clamour and Indignation which it has excited against him. But no Severity of earthly Punishment can I am convinced be more than adequate to "his undivulged Crimes as yet "unwhipt of Justice." In every thing concerning India He has been most wicked and corrupt—a cut Purse of the State—a Thief who stole the precious Diadem from the Shelf—In the whole of his public Life He has been actuated solely by the basest Selfishness, and to the Advancement of himself and his Connections would have sacrificed the best Interests and the highest Honor of his Country. There is something singularly *condign* in his Punishment. On many Occasions he has made Pit a Sharer in his guilt, and on this he has made him an ample Sharer in his Diagrace. He has contaminated every thing he has touched. Lord Lidmouth and his Friends have injured themselves even by the "half-faced" Support which they have rendered him. The very worst which could have happened to them from their most decided Opposition

to him would have been the Dissolution of the present Ministry. But from this they would not long have suffered. They would have confirmed the Opinion which the Public has of their Virtue and would thus have strengthened the surest Foundations of their Power. Supported by the public Voice the King might soon and easily have reinstated them—They would I am convinced have found Honesty the best Policy.

Powney was here a few days ago. He gave us great Pleasure by his favourable Report of you—He told us you were not only in excellent Health but had regained your Hearing. If I thought you were half so vindictive as I am, I should congratulate you upon your Recovery of this Sense, when there was so much to gratify it in the deserved and universal Opprobrium of your Enemies. You will live long enough to see your Triumph over them complete—Your own Worth has long since been established—They are hastening to complete your Victory by the most damning Proofs of their own Delinquencies.

I myself continue to derive so large a Portion of my Health and Happiness from Horses that I hope your Love and Use of them still continue—I have now a Grand Daughter of your Arab—She is four years old, but by no means equal to the Expectations I had formed of her from my Knowledge of *his* Worth. The Germe of Excellence however is I am convinced still latent in his Breed, and I shall persevere in my Attempts to bring it forth, I am now very anxiously considering what will be the best Cross for my Filly. Has your Grey Mare borne any Produce to Tom Tring? *That* is I think an excellent cross.—I do not ask you after your concerns with Mr Warre, or at the India House, for I confess I see in neither much Prospect of Gratification. When I last heard of Mrs Hastings it was in Terms that pleased me much—I hope She goes on to improve in good Health, and its attendants, good Looks and good Spirits—Remember us to her most affectionately. Mrs Thompson and our *Eight young* Children are I thank God all well, excepting only that one or two of them have slight colds. Your Godson Henry Vansittart is very commendably doing duty with his Regiment in spite of the Disgust which Militia Officers might reasonably feel at their Treatment, and in spite of the Temptations which his independent Fortune offers him to a Life of untrammelled Liberty. When you particularly wish for that Species of Happiness which arises from conferring it on others write to me and tell me that you and Mrs Hastings are well. I am your's most faithfully

[Addressed to:—]

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

WARREN HASTINGS ESQ.

Daylsford House

Chipping Norton.

No. 106.

[The first page of this Letter is missing.]

cough. My grey mare, Ann, has disappointed me two years successively, and she is lame. So I seldom ride now, but about my own grounds, and that commonly on one of Mrs Hastings's ponies. (I have some thoughts of having my mare covered by one of our itinerant cart-horse stallions. I think it would prove a better cross than any with better blood, as she is rather too long, and wants what is called bone. If your judgment revolts at this, you must make haste to forbid it. Is not this something like *sepulchri immemor struis domos?*).

Coll and Mrs Imhoff were so kind and considerate as to give me their company in my return from town, though they could only stay with us just a week. They left us both in perfect health, and were evidently the better for even so short an enjoyment of our pure atmosphere, good hours and quiet. They too are among those whom you ought to love on the credit of your own sentiments for them. This I take to be the meaning of one of Solomon's proverbs, which Bishop Lowth in his lectures professes not to understand. As I have begun a new sheet without matter left to occupy it, I will give you my version of the text. I have forgot the chapter.

Seek you another's thoughts to trace?
Your own with calm reflexion scan.
As in the pool face answers face,
So doth the heart of man to man.

Mrs Hastings charges me to assure you and Mrs Thompson of her truly affectionate regards, and fervent wishes for both and for your beloved children, and to her assurances and wishes I beg leave to add mine.

I am ever, my dear Thompson,
Your affectionate

WARREN HASTINGS.

Remember me kindly to your friend, Harry Vansittart. I am glad that he is so laudably employed, and am not sure that I regret his having totally quitted Oxford, if he has quitted it. I shall tell you in my next what I have,—that is, what I shall have done in the affair of Mr Warre.

No. 107.

PENTON LODGE.

Wed. 8th May 1805

My dear and honest Sir

I forbid the Bans. Both my Judgment and Feelings revolt at the hor-

rible Idea of submitting your beautiful Grey Mare to an Itinerant Cart Horse. What could be expected from such a Junction but a Beast fit for neither Waggon Coach or Saddle? I believe as you appear to do that She has so much foreign Blood about her as to require for the Improvement of her Breed something more indigenous to our Soil than is to be found in the Generality of our high bred Racers. I am convinced too that from the great Age of both her Parents She is herself deficient in Vigor of Stamen and requires therefore for the Correction of that Defect a young and powerful Stallion. But surely all this is to be found without looking for it in a hairy legged lumbering Cart Horse. I have no Doubt that not far from you, most probably in Warwickshire you will find a large strong young half bred Horse of the Sort of the old English Hunter, fine in Shape of good Action, and above all with firm fore Legs who would prove an excellent Cross for your Grey Mare. I should indeed recommend *Tom Tring* were he not 20 years old, and did I not conjecture that he is the identical Horse whom you have already tried and who has for two succeeding years disappointed you. *Huc and Cry*, a famous Trotter and Master of great Weight covers at Uffington between Farringdon and Wantage and probably attends Burford Market. Even He would be infinitely better for your Mare than a mere cart Horse. You will see by the Importance which I give to this Subject that I do not approve your Application of the "*Sepulchri immemor etc.*" Even if you had already one *Foot in the Grave*, which I thank God is apparently very far from being the Case, I should still advise you to keep the other *in the Stirrup*. This Fast hold of the present World whilst a Man is looking steadfastly at the next is I think rendered very consistent in the Advice of Khreeshna to Argoon. "Think of this World" says that divine Preceptor "as if you were to live for ever, and of the next as if the Angel of Death had hold of you by the Forelock."

I know the Fine Taste the active and disposing Mind of Mrs Hastings. I know too the enraptured Sense you have of these and all her other Excellencies—I can readily believe therefore that upon your Return to Daysford you saw in all its Features the delightful Traces of her Genius. A Ride to Daysford is amongst the Pleasures with which I feast my Imagination. But I find the Difficulty of leaving my home every Hour increase. I must go to London for a few days, and before I married a Voyage to India would hardly have required a greater Effort.

Though Lord Melville is to be struck out of the List of privy Councillors, I shall still attend the Meeting at Winchester on Thursday next. The Policy of the Minister in yielding to the public Sense, should not prevent the Manifestation of it, though I fear it will very generally have, as it was intended, that Effect.

I beg my Dear Sir you will present our affectionate Regards to Mrs

Hastings and assure her that We are truly thankful for the Kindness which She has at all times shewed us. Believe me Dear Sir

most truly your's

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

[Addressed to:—]

WARREN HASTINGS ESQ.

Daylsford House

Chipping Norton.

No. 108.

PENTON LODGE.

Thursd. 13 June 1805.

My dear and good Sir

I came home last Night, and this Morning I received your Favour of the 11th. I am flattered by Mrs Hastings's Choice of me for the Trust which you as well as herself are desirous of reposing in me. As far as that Choice proceeds from her Belief of my Attachment to both of you, I may confidently say it is amply justified. But if it be dictated by any Opinion of me as a Man of Business, I must with equal Truth confess that She has not in her Election of me displayed her usual Sagacity in the "*Discernment of Spirits*." I am naturally averse to Business, and had not Pride and Principle made me through Life much more anxious and diligent when called upon to act for others than when required to act only for myself, I ought in conscience to decline the Trust with which She wishes to invest me. I will however venture to accept of it, assuring myself that however I may in other respects be unfit for it I shall not neglect it's Duties, from the Want of either Gratitude Zeal or Honor.

In the Recommendation of a Coadjutor I know not whom I can better name than our common Friend, my Brother in Law, George Powney—If you approve of him, either Mrs Hastings or yourself will of course write to him on the Subject.

I am glad to see you entering upon a Task which too many Men not only of Genius and Talents but of Business have to the great Astonishment of their Successors frequently left undone. Permit me to suggest to you that in these Arrangements you ought to employ a Lawyer, and that you will not easily find one of greater Skill or Integrity than Mr Forster. It appears to me that for many Reasons the Trustees for Mrs Hastings ought to be distinct from the Executors of your Will. But neither this nor any other Precaution necessary to the lucid Arrangement of your Affairs or the easy Management of them will escape the Consideration of your Lawyer, if you employ a proper one, and consult him freely.

Whilst in London I saw the Imhoffs looking extremely well and in high Health and Spirits. Upon my Return I had the Happiness to find Mrs Thompson and our Eight Children enjoying their usual good Health. A Blessing of which I fully know the great Importance, and for which I hope I am duly thankful to the great and good Giver of it. Present our kind Regards to Mrs Hastings and believe me

Dear and hon'd Sir

most truly yours

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

[Addressed to:—]

WARREN HASTINGS Esq.

Daylsford House

Chipping Norton.

No. 109.

PENTON LODGE.

Friday 5 July 1805

My dear and hon'd Sir

I have just now received your Letter dated, by Mistake I suppose, *only yesterday*. I had before duly received those of the 23d and 24 June, the former accompanied by your lucid and liberal Observations on Mr Warren's Claim—Before I wrote to you on that Subject I thought it expedient to wait for Mr Warren's Communications concerning it—I confess I expected he would have refused to submit it to my Decision. Late on Saturday Evening I received from him the Papers which you had transmitted to him, with a short Note simply requesting "*an early Answer as he is under the Necessity of bringing Mr Jones's Affairs to a Conclusion*—" but without a single Document, Statement or Observation in explanation of the Subject. I have great Reason to believe that I have already incurred his Displeasure by my Conduct in this Business—After I had submitted his Claim to your Consideration, I reported to him your Thoughts concerning it—He upon some subsequent Occasion recurred to this Report, and as I conceived gave it a Construction which it would not bear, attributing to you larger Concessions than you had made—I told him so, and when We next met He would hardly speak to me. This Circumstance is not calculated to render the Task which you have assigned to me a pleasant one. But I do not decline it, for it has never been a Maxim with me to decline the Offices of Friendship, because they happen to be attended with Difficulties. Were this a Question indeed of Right between yourself and Mr Warren, in which he had absolute and legal Pretensions, I should think it very unbecoming of me even under your commands to take upon myself the Decision of it, for I am no more fit to be a Judge in your Cause than my own

—But his is an Appeal solely to your Justice and Generosity—It concerns Your Honor only, and I can truly assert that there is not a Man on Earth more tremblingly alive to the Preservation of it than I am. My very Attachment to you in this Case is likely to operate rather in Favor of Mr Warre's Claim than against it; Since poor as I fear you are, I would infinitely rather mulet your Pocket than rob you of the smallest Portion of your good Name or subject it to any Doubt or Suspicion. With these Sentiments I shall to the best of my ability endeavour to execute the Commission you have given me. I have requested Mr Warre to give me Information upon one or two Points, and I will beg you to let me know whether the Houses at Cheltenham were Freehold Copyhold or Leasehold.

With respect to the intended Arrangements concerning Mrs Hastings's separate Property, if they have for their Object merely it's Security against the Casualties to which it is liable whilst in the Hands of Bankers or any other Men of Business, a power of Attorney witnessed or executed by yourself as well as her may perhaps answer her Purpose. She would in this Case direct her Agents to transfer all her Stock into the joint Names of George Powney and myself, and We must either personally or by Attorney accept it—But if her object be to strengthen her Title to her separate Property, to guard it against yourself your Creditors and all the World, this I conceive cannot be done by a mere Power of Attorney: Such a Power as the very Words imply can impart no Authority of which She is not herself already possessed—If She has a separate Property, this may enable her Attorneys to manage it for her; But whether She has such a Property or not will still remain as much a Question as ever. In my very imperfect Knowledge of the Subject, this is all I can at present say concerning it. But I can very confidently repeat that in all delicate Arrangements affecting Property it is wisest to consult the best legal Authorities. Men seldom attempt to make their own Shoes without having learned something of the Art. Yet we often see them in matters of infinitely greater moment, and with almost an equal unskilfulness in what they are about acting as their own Lawyers, to the great Injury of themselves and their Friends, and to the no less Emolument of that learned Profession.

I rejoice to hear that Mrs Hastings is well, and that the Imhoffs are with you, for I am convinced their Company must contribute greatly to your Happiness. Your good Head has borne the Petting of many a pityless Storm, and after Calumny has broken its Shafts upon it, you seem yourself to assail it in a manner that would addle the Brains of most men—But temperate and naturally healthy as you are you may do any thing. The Practice would be a dangerous one to Men who have no Activity except in eating and drinking. Yet I have heard that in Russia it is extended to the whole of the Body, and that People there universally roll themselves in Snow the moment they come out

of the Hot Bath. Mrs Thompson presents her kind Regards to you and joins me in affectionate Remembrance of Mrs Hastings and the Imhoffa. We are I thank God all well. Believe me dear and honest Sir most truly your's

GEO. NESBIT THOMPSON

[Addressed to:—]

WARREN HASTINGS ESQ.

Daylford House

Chipping Norton.

No. 110.

PENTON LODGE

8th July 1805

My dear Madam

The Nomination of your Son as one of your Trustees is highly satisfactory to myself, and I am convinced will be no less so to my Friend Powney; nor can I for my own part see that in any possible case his Participation in this Trust can be prejudicial either to yourself or him. But Objections which escape me, may be obvious to Men more conversant in Business. I have already advised you to consult a Lawyer. If you do so, let me request you will ask him whether as your Son will probably succeed to your Property, there can be any Objection to his being one of your Trustees—I suggest this Question no less for his Benefit than your own. You will readily conceive that both to Powney and myself it must be highly satisfactory to be joined in the Trust by a Person who has so beneficial an Interest in it as your only Child.

In my total Ignorance of every thing that regards your Property I had probably when I wrote to Mr Hastings an erroneous Idea of your Intentions concerning it. I then conceived that you wished to substantiate your Title to it, and to place your Rights beyond all Controversy. I now presume you intend nothing more than to guard it against the possible however improbable Failure of your Agents. If this be your sole Object I conceive it may be best effected by a short Deed assigning your Property to Trustees for your own sole and separate Benefit and to be at your exclusive and entire Disposal.—In this Deed Mr Hastings may either concur or not as shall be advised by your Lawyer, and agreeable to yourselves. You will then direct your Agents to transfer all your Stocks into the joint Names of those Trustees and to deliver up to them all your Securities—Your present Agents may still continue to be your Bankers—Under a Power from your Trustees they may continue to receive your Dividends, and nothing that affects their Property can then ever injure your's beyond the Balance of Cash which may happen to be in their hands. Though what I have said on this subject may be of no use to you, it will I hope at least convince you that I take an affectionate Interest in

it, and consequently dispose you to forgive a Frankness of Communication which unless dictated by such a Motive might appear impertinent.

Mrs Thompson is thankful for your kind Remembrance of her—She and all our Eight Children are I most heartily thank God in perfect Health. She is however under considerable uneasiness for her two very lovely and interesting Nieces, Charlotte and Caroline Grindall, who are both at this time ill with the Scarlet Fever. Sir Walter Farquhar assures her Mother that the Disorder is not violent of its kind; and that there is every reason to hope for their speedy Recovery. Your God Daughter Marian is a very good Girl, and desires me to present her Duty to you. Present our friendly Regards to all your Party and believe me

Dear Madam

most truly your's

GEO. NESBITT THOMPSON.

[Addressed to:—]

Mrs HASTINGS

Daylsford House.

Chipping Norton.

(To be continued.)

Correspondence of Richard Edwards—IV.

[Continued.]

EDITED BY LT.-COL. SIR RICHARD CARNAC TEMPLE, BART., C.B., C.I.E.

LETTER CXLII.

GEORGE PEACOCK TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 3967.)

Hugly 27th May 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Loveing friend, your's baring date the 19th current have received by Mr Bugden, with a bundle qt. 1 6 pair of slippers (which indeed are something of the least),² for which give you many thanks.

I have by this conveighance sent you some powder, as alsoe Mr Knipe, which hope may prove servisab[le] to you. I shall be hartily glad to meet with you halfe way [[?] up the] river at any time, soe that you appoint a time when, but rall[y] wish that I migh enjoy [sic] the happinesse to see you her[e [?] in Hugly]. As for conveighance you shall not want what [[?] I can furnish] and likewise your friend, which is what offers att pr[esent] from

Your assured loveing Brother to serve you

GEO. PEACOCKE

Pray doe me the kindnesse as to send me 3 or 4 breeches strings of that ordinary sort

[Endorsed] T[o] Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant in Cassumbazar

LETTER CXLII.

HENRY CARPENTER TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 3969).

Singee³ le 10th June 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Sir, Yesterday yours of date May 28th came to hand, and in it your

1. Containing.

2. By "something of the least," Peacock seems to mean, "a little too small."

3. Singhiya, the Company's factory at Patna. See Letters XLV, LXXXIII, XCVI, CXXXIX.

duplycateing orders, the which you might have spared, assuring your self your Letters are of more esteem with me then to be cast behind me. I cannot impute my not writing to ignorance of Dispatches, your honest Chief² alwayes acquainting us with it ere he putts pen to paper, but to a Cause the which, when you shall know, I doubt not your pardon. We have here bene possess'd with a false report of your comeing hither and have bene in expectation of your arriveall these 5 or 6 dayes. Your Letter produced 2 different effects in me. I was Joy'd to see your hand in a piece of paper, but that was Counterballanc'd by the loss of a happiness I did flutter my self I should possess by your Good Company.

By this barer I have sent you 3 pieces Chint³ 3r.; 3 Shashes⁴ 2r.; 3 Girdles 2r: 4a., [total] 7r: 4a. These came first to my hand, and I had sent for as many more, &ca.⁵ things, but then the newes of your comeing caused mee to forbid it. These have Laine by me 20 dayes, and for aforesaid reason hope you'll pardon my not complying in quantety, but the rest and your peeter⁶ shall, God willing, come on peeter boates whesse Dustick⁷ we are endeavouring to procure, but fear shall meet with Like Impediments as last year, which if doe, shall seek some other way of conveyance.

Sir, you may Justly tax me with Impudence for giving you a Second trouble e're Satisfaction given for first. I would desire you, if not too grent a trouble, to procure and send me Per first oppertunety a piece of Mullmolls⁸ of 7 or 8 Rupees for shashes, and half a Dozen Girdles for Woman.⁹ Left 2 of them be with gold Collabatte,¹⁰ with 3 or 4 stripes of same, the other 4 plainer and with Silver Collabatte. Pray lett them be well Colourd. They are for a Toaken to the Coast¹¹ to a spetiall friend. I shall order Mr. Naylor¹² shortly to pay you for Latter; the former must crave your farther Credite. I shall trouble you with noe more Scribleing at present save to lett you know how much my good wishes are dedicated to your Service.

1. By "Dispatches" the writer means means the despatch of messengers (*Kaid*).

2. Job Charnock, the head of Patna Factory.

3. Chintz. See Letter XLVI.

4. Turban-cloths. See Letters XCVI, CXXXVII.

5. And other.

6. Saltpetre.

7. Pers. *dustak*, a pass or permit.

8. *Mulmul*, muslin. See Letters LXXXI, XCVI, &c.

9. Embroidered silk for sashes in contradistinction to leathern belts worn by men.

10. *Kalabattu*, metal thread. See Letters CXII, CXXVIII.

11. Madras.

12. John Naylor. See Letters XCIV, CXXIV, &c.

I Remaine Sir
Your highly obliged Freind and
Servant at Command

HENRY CARPENTER

P.S. pray by next send me for a month or 2 divertizement the Volume of
playes you have; I mean not Beaumont [and F] l[e]tcher's
idem H. C.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassumbazar,
with a small parcell marked R E

LETTER CXLIII.

SAMUEL BULLIVANT TO RICHARD EDWARDS

(O. C. 3970).

Mr Richard Edwards

Singee June 11th 1674

Respected Friend

Yours of the 28 past came safe to hand, by which see you have newes of
the sale of my Ophium¹ at Rupees 150 per Maund. I am sorry Mr Bugden
Refused the primo markt². 'Tis sold at so small advance that I feare its
amount will scarcely pay the primo cost, by reason must pay interest for the
money for 8 Mos., but must now bee content with my fortune, and Returne
you many thanks for your car[e] and trouble therein, being no less obliged
to you than if h[a]d found a better sale. 'Tis not often (since my coming
into India) that have adventured to trade in any thing, but such are my
stars, it hath alwayes proved to my prejudice.

I should bee glad to heare the Muske was sold also, which I pray you to
desire him to effect if possible, being unwilling to leave this place before
have disengaged my selfe.³ What you write concerning Remitting the money
for the Ophium to mee I approve of, and could wish the Muske were sold also
and its money Remitted with the [. . .] Commodity will dry and So I
may bee a grea[t]t[er] booser [. . .]. The things you have provided for mee
you may, if you please, keep by you untill my arrivall with you or further
order about them.

1. See Letter CXXXIX.

2. From this it appears that Edmund Bugden had refused the first offer for Bullivant's
goods in the hope of getting a better price.

3. See Letter CXXXIX, where Bullivant comments on his indebtedness to native
merchants in Patna. "Disengage" is here used in its obsolete sense of "to free from
contract or obligation."

Pray present my due Respects to Mr Vincent, Mr J. M., E. L., Etea friends¹ with you. With my kind Respects to your selfe, wishing you all health and happiness and more fortunate in all your enterprizes than ever was

Your reall freind to serve you

SAM. BULLYVANT.

[Endorsed]

For Mr Richard Edwards
Merchant In Cassimbuzar.

LETTER CXLIV.

EDMUND BUGDEN TO RICHARD EDWARDS

(O. C. 3971).

Hugly 13th June 74

Mr Richard Edwards

Respected freind

This is onely to accompany my Brother,² and Mr Priaulx,⁵ with the peece for Sarsenet⁴ I brought away by a mistake and never paid for, which excuse mee for. The bearer will tell you all that befell them here, and what I did, so do not enlarge, but tell you that I am

Your assured freind and servant

EDMUND BUGDEN

[On reverse] Mr Edwards.

pray send mee one Bale of course Sugar, I meane Pazorpore,⁵ and my Brother or Mr Cole⁶ will pay you.

E. B.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassambazar

1. John Marshall, Edward Littleton and other friends.

2. John Bugden, for whom see Letters LXXVIII, CV, CXIX.

3. This individual, whose Christian name I have not ascertained, may have been a son of Mr. Paul Priaulx, who became a Freeman of the Company in 1671 (*Court Book*, vol. 27 fol. 134, 135). He seems to have been employed with John Bugden to the Hugli River, for in the only other mention I have found of him, a month later, 25th July, 1674 (*Factory Records, Hugli*, vol. A), he is ordered to look after the vessels until the return of George Heron, pilot.

4. Sarsenet, a fine soft silk.

5. Perhaps an error for Pataapur, Midnapur District, where sugar was produced.

6. Robert Cole, dyer. See Letter CXXXVI.

LETTER CXLV.
 GEORGE WHITE TO RICHARD EDWARDS
 (O. C. 3972).

Worthy Freind,

Madapollam¹ 19 June 1674

Sir, Yours of the 6 past came to hand the 16 present, abounding with many gratefull Acknowledgments, which I can by no means Receive as in the least measure due to any desert in me, but I thankfully Accept them, and highly Estimate those noble Emanations of your Oblidging Gennerous Spiritt, whereby you have further ingagd me to your Service in paying me ~~me~~ liberally before hand.

I am sorry Mr Vickarrs² left you soe in the darke without any more particular Account of the concerns, which I feare will Render the Recovery more difficult, beeing promiscuously with Others, and not distinguishable by any of Mr Langstons³ papers that I can yet Understand; but I hope the Account you have now inclosed may contribute somewhat to the discovery of your propriety,⁴ which I shall dilligently endeavour Upon my Return to Metchleputam, where the goods are, and Mr Mohun allsoe lately theither gone, whome I intend suddenly to follow, whence by the first conveyance you may expect further advice what I have Effected therein.

The parcell sky colourd gold stript stuff your Note mentions, I beleive Mr Vickarrs made Use of himselfe, for I remember he wore such a Coate at his beeing here, which I very much fancyed, and shall esteeme it a great kindness if you please to favour me in procury of such a parcell, which you may recommend to Mr Reade at Hugly for conveyance to me.

All the particulars you desire from hence shall bee sent you by the ships, if they proceed to your parts, and in faylure thereof, by the first Other Secure Opportunity that Offers Which, with mine and my Wifes due Respects and cordiall wishes for your continued health and Wellfare, is [[?] the needfull] now from

Sir, Your very affectionate Servant

Geo. White

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

[Endorsed]

Merchant In Cassambuzur

1. Madapollam (Madhavayapalem), in Narasapur taluk, Godavari District, where the Company had a factory subordinate to Fort St. George.

2. John Vickers, for whom see Letter V.

3. Francis Langston, elected factor on the 1st October, 1667, was sent to Madras and thence to Masulipatam, where he died in May 1672 (*Court Book*, vol. 26, pp. 41, 43, 67, 74; O.C. 3573, 3639).

4. Used in its obsolete sense of "property."

5. Richard Mohun, Chief at Masulipatam. See Letters XXXVII, CXXIX.

LETTER CXLVI.

GEORGE PEACOCK TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 3973).

Hugly the 22[nd Jun]e, 1674

Loving Friend

the 11th Present received yours of the 9th, giving you many thanks for your care in the Providing the breechestrings &c. which I see greatly wanted,¹ and shall, when opportunity serves, endeavour to gratify these and many other kindnesses of yours. I expect by the returne of Mr Pace² to enjoy the happiness of seeing you here, to whome pray p[re]sent my deare [a]ffections.

By your order have made a d[emand] of Mr. Chuseman³ for the [? 21 ru.] due to you, whose promises that when his wax come up, which will be in 2 or 3 day's, he will make sale and pay what he is indebted to you. I have also inquired of George Herron⁴ concerning the 2 bailes of shugar, which sopro he has write to you about.

Not elce at present, save my love to you and all friends with you, I rest

Your assured Friend and servant

GEO. PEACOCKE.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant in Cassumbazar.

LETTER CXLVII.

JOHN SMITH TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 3974).

Ballasore, June 23d. 74

Mr Richard Edwards

Esteemed good friend

Pray deliver to the bearer hereof two pieces 20 Coveds⁵ each of the best Red Taffaty⁶ for my Account, with 20 rs. in money, and take his Receipt for it.

1. See Letter CXLI.

2. Thomas Pace. See Letter LXXX.

3. William Chuseman. See Letter CIII.

4. See Letter CXXXVIII.

5. Cubit, ell. See Letters LVII, LXXVIII, CXXI.

6. See Letters XIII, LXXIX, LXXXI.

To morrow I shall write to Mr. Marshall¹ to pay you Rupees 300 and write to you more at Large.

With my Respects, I rest

Your Reall friend and ready servant

JOHN SMITH.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards.

Merchant I[n Cassambazar.]

LETTER CXLVIII.

(O. C. 3976).

Ballasore June 24th 74

Mr Richard Edwards

Respected freind

Yours of 2d current I Received 20th ditto.

O ma binnaq qid nwlwrx qidn bwhx ir qidn bwhx or hmgorz plorz biw pi lwmp ox qid Landw nwboxrwu dt plw emnwliwbw O mudobw qid pi kia uidrw ekl qid amq sq enoporz plw hwmbq sinu pi E. K²

I have according to Your desire ordered you on Mr Marshall R. 300,³ Suppose heell pay it you, of which pray advise per first.

In has[te] take leave and subscribe

Your assured freind to serve you,

JOHN SMITH.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant in Cassambazar.

1. John Marshall. See Letter XXXII.

2. This sentence, written in the cipher employed by Smith in Letters LXXXV, CXI, CXXV, CXL, reads as follows:—

"I am sorry you reveng your self on your self in laying things soe to heart. If you have resigned up the warehouse, I advise you to com doune (to Balasor) which you may by writing the least word to W. C."

Smith seems to be alluding to Edwards's disappointment that Edward Littleton had been placed above him at Kāsimbāzar (See Letter CXXV). By W. C. Walter Clavell is meant.

3. Smith means that he is remitting Rs. 300 to Edwards by a bill, which he has arranged for John Marshall to honour.

LETTER CXLIX.

MATTHIAS VINCENT TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 3979).

[Of the parentage of Matthias Vincent nothing has been ascertained. It is probable that he was a son of, or nearly connected with, Sir William Vincent, Alderman of London, who was knighted in 1661 and who held stock in the East India Company, but proof is wanting. His two securities, on election as factor, on the 4th November 1661, were John and Thomas Vincent, the latter being his brother to whom he subsequently gave a power of attorney. Vincent arrived in India in August 1662 and was sent to Hugli where he acted as warehousekeeper. In October 1667 he became a member of Council in "the Bay" and in 1671 he succeeded John March as Chief at Kasimbazar, thus arousing the hostility of Joseph Hall who considered himself superseded. Vincent had married some time before 1670 and his wife Mary? Greenhill was a Romanist. Hall reported to the Company that Vincent's house was a "resort of Romish priests" and that his family "Consisting of about 20 fringeys [*farangi*, Indian-born Portuguese] and Portuguese" had ousted the Company's servants from their rooms in Kasimbazar factory. Hall further accused Vincent of misappropriation of the Company's money. By the Court's orders an enquiry was instituted. The "Jesuits and Romish Priests that goe up and downe to Mr. Vincents wife and family" were found to be non-existent, only one Franciscan priest on his way to Agra having visited the factory, but no answer was returned to the question "whether he educates his Children in the Protestant or Romish Religion." The other charges brought by Hall against Vincent, that of inefficiency and of using, in collusion with Walter Clavell, the Company's money for his "owne interest on pretence of providing saltpetre" were referred for examination on the spot by an agent of the Company.

In 1673 Vincent became implicated in the death of Raghu the Company's *poddar* or cashkeeper at Kasimbazar, who died after a flogging administered by Anant Ram, the house-broker. Vincent was absent at the time and it was proved that he had no hand in the affair, but the matter caused much local excitement and a heavy bribe was necessary to placate the native governor. For a full account of this incident and the enquiry conducted by Streynsham Master three years later, see *Diaries of Streynsham Master*, ed. Temple.

In 1675 Major William Puckle, who had been sent out by the Company to inspect their factories in Madras and Bengal, examined the charges brought by Hall against Vincent, and found the evidence very "slender."

In the following year, when Streynsham Master was at Kasimbazar, Vincent brought a counter-charge against Hall. After an enquiry lasting several days, Hall was adjudged to be the guilty party and was forbidden to hold any office under the Company until definite orders were received from England. A year later, on the death of Walter Clavell, in August 1677, Vincent became "Chief" in the "the Bay."

In July 1678 Vincent went on a political mission to Dacca and returned to Kasimbazar in October bringing a *nishan* or letters-patent, signed by the Nawab of Bengal, Prince Muhammad A'zam, third son of the Emperor Aurangzeb. This document granted trading privileges to the English in Bengal and was considered to be "well worth the Charge and exceeding pains taken by the Cheife in obtaining the same." Vincent was, nevertheless, still looked upon with suspicion by the authorities at home who had good reason to believe that he was carrying on private trade. In 1680 he declined the third place in Council at Fort St. George, probably because he would have been unable to continue to increase his income by the forbidden channel. At this time another accusation was brought against him in England. He was said to have acted with undue harshness towards John Thomas, a lunatic servant of the Company and to have practised "diabolical acts with Brammines to bewitch" him. But a greater offence was his intimacy with Thomas Pitt, a notorious private trader (afterwards Governor of Fort St. George), who had married his "younger niece."

Although Vincent disclaimed any connection with "a Privateere from Muscatt" brought to Bengal by Pitt, appearances were against him and he was dismissed by the Court in 1681 for "infidelity" in "abetting advising or conniving at the late Interloper which landed in the Bay." It was ordered that his papers should be seized, and an enquiry instituted into his alleged frauds, and he himself sent home under arrest. The orders reached India in 1682 but Vincent seemed to be very little disturbed by the Company's displeasure and calmly went on with the arrangement of his affairs. In December Parson Evans wrote to Edward Reade that he and Edward Littleton were "in a faire way to finish their bussnesse to their own hearts content." They had been "served with Subpoenas out of Chancery" but refused to appear, "saying they would answer in England."

Vincent returned home with Thomas Pitt and on his arrival, in July 1683, was kept in custody for a few days, after which bail was allowed. The Court seems to have been unable to make out a case against him and his name soon disappears from the proceedings. He settled down in London, was knighted in March 1685 and died in 1688 leaving two sons, Vincent and Theodore. His widow, Dame Mary Vincent, died in 1692. See *Court*

Books, vols. xxiv, xxvi, xxix; *Letter Books*, vols. v, vi, vii; *Factory Records Fort St. George*, vols. xvi, xxviii, *Hugli* ii, iv; *Kasimbazar*, i, *Miscellaneous* iii; C. R. Wilson, *Early Annals of Bengal*, vol. I; Yule, *Hedges' Diary*, vols. I, II, III. *Diaries of Strengham Master*, ed Temple; *P.C.C.*, Wills, 86 Foot, 233 Fane.]

Mr Richard Edwards

Casimbazar, 13th July 1674

Respected Friend

I have in your charge and committed to your care sent 623 Copangs or Japan Jeebies,¹ which are said to be worth at Dacca (to which place you are now bound and whither I wish you a good voyage) 20 ru. 4 a. per piece.² I wish they may meet with so good a market. There is Soopull, Chittur Nullis Gomausteh,³ whom you may send for. He may be available to you in their sale and taking good money. You may also speake to Mr. Alues⁴ and Mr. Hervy,⁵ to whom I have written to assist you; but I suppose you may doe best by the other meanes. However, rather then spend too much time or take bad money, bring them with you again.

I have sent a buoy and a rope, which make fast when you come into the boat to the thing you carry them in; and pray be a little carefull how you crost the river,⁶ the wind blowing some times pretty fresh. Your best way will be to kee all the way under the weather shore, where with conveniency you can.

I wish you a good voyage and safe return unto

Your very assured Friend to serve you

[No endorsement.]

MATTS. VINCENT.

1. Jap. *ichibu*, spelt by the old writers variously, "jeeby, Rjib, itchabo."

2. Vincent has mixed up his Japanese money. The Japanese *ko-ban* (copang or rigo) was a gold saul of 223-275 grains, worth £2 to £2.5/. The *ichibu* was quarter of a *ko-ban* and worth about 10/-. It will be noted that Vincent's valuation of 20 ru. 4 a. makes the coin mentioned worth £4.10/-. Presumably, therefore, he was not alluding to either the *ko-ban* or *ichibu* but to the *o-ban*, a large gold coin worth two to three *ko-bans*.

3. Suphal, Chitar Mal's *gunashita*, agent. Chitar Mal was a *parraf*, money-changer, at Kasimbazar, employed by the Company.

4. An error for Elwes. Robert Elwes was Chief at Dacca. See Letter I.

5. Samuel Hervy, Second at Dacca under Robert Elwes. See Letter CII.

6. Apparently Edwards was to take the money by boat from Kasimbazar to Dacca, and the buoy and rope were given him to attach to the box in case the boat upset. He was to keep the weather shore all the way, which would at that season be the right bank, from Rimpur Baulia to Goalundo, after which he would have to cross the river (in order to get on to Dacca) at a point where it is very wide and liable to storms in July-August. It is, however, doubtful if Edwards ever went to Dacca in 1674, as from Letter CLIII, *infra*, we find that he had been to Hugli and was back in Kasimbazar before the 14th August, which would not have given him time to get to and from Dacca in the interval by river.

LETTER CL.
HENRY CARPENTER TO RICHARD EDWARDS.
(O. C. 3984.)

Singee 1e 25th July 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Most respected Friend

Sir, my last to you was Per return of your Cossitt¹ of date June 1e 10th,² by which conveyance I sent you 3 pieces Chint and as many Girdles and Shashes since when you have not advised of their Receipt, though[h] an opportunity hath Presented; but I dare not Impute it to your neglect. Supposing (as you have formerly advised) the dispat[eh] might have bene given, as well as many formerly, without your knowledge.

I then writ you we had for some time expected your arriveall her[e], which repor[t] we [? had] from a Servant of Mr. Bugdens that an Engl[ish]man [. . . .] hither [.] and that which (? made us) beleive it to be you was his saying it was Peer-Cawns³ Master that was, and the more by reason Mr. Bullivant had been expected at Hugly for some time before. This troublesome insertion I have given you will, I hope, procure my pardon for not in ful[l] complying with your former Orders, but shall Speedily supply the defect.

In my last I requested you to provide and send me half a Dozen Girdles for women, Vixt. 2 of a good Sort strip'd through with gold collabottes, the other 4 more plaine of silver,⁴ all of good lively Colours (those to bee Sent, if not to great a trouble, by first oppertunety, I deferring answering a Const Letter till your receipt) and a piece of Mulmolls of 7 or 8 Rupees; for the former shall take order⁵ your payment there. I againe make same request and hope shall speedely heare from you. I know I need not use reiteratings to you, nither should I, was I certaine my former had attain'd your reception. You may Justly tearm me impudently hold for giving you fresh troubles ere retaliation made for many of older date, but shall end your present trouble, relying on your goodness for a partiall construction of it, and remaine, Sir,

Yours in all Degrees

HENRY CARPENTER.

1. *Kasid*, messenger.

2. See Letter CXLIII.

3. Pir Khân's.

4. See Letter CXLII for these goods.

5. The sense seems to want "give orders for."

6. "Partial" is used in its (now rare) sense of "favourable."

P.S. Pray favour me in Sending for a small season your thick Volume of playes, not Beaumont and Fletcher. It shall carefully be returned you Per Sir, Your Servant pray forward Inclosed.

idem H. C.

[No endorsement.]

LETTER CII.

SAMUEL BULLIVANT TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 3986).

Singee, 4 August 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Respected Freind

Yours of the 12 past month came safe to hand, with the bill inclosed Drawne on Mr. Charnock for Rups. 300: which hee accepted and will pay it. I returne you thanks for your care and trouble in said, and if I can serve you in any thing here to my utmost ability shall readily doe it. I am [sor]ry the Muske will not sell,¹ but must bee content; hope if any Europe Ships arrive, my fin[d]e a markt. I have not more to trouble you with at present, save tender of hearty love to your selfe, wishing you health, and subscribe,

Your reall freind to serve you

SAM. BULLIVANT.

P.S. My due Respects to all my freinds in your Factory.

Idem S. B.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant in Cassumbazar.

LETTER CIII.

JOHN SMITH TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 3988).

Hugly August 19th 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Esteemed good freind

Last night I arrived here and am informed a Letter of yours is gone for mee to Ballasore, and hope ere Longe I shall meet with it here. Since I am got hither I challenge your former promise to meet mee here, and I'm

1. See Letter CXLIII.

confident your business cannot stay you, therefore pra[y], ere Longe, doe hope you'l make the more hast, being I cannot assure you of my Long stay, coming on my own business,¹ and so soone as that done must be Gone; soe hoping to see you here ere Longe, Refer all till then, and at present conclude with Subscription

Your assur'd freind to serve you

JOHN SMITH.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards
Merchant in C[assumbazar].

LETTER CLIII.

EDWARD READE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 3989).

Hugly August 19th 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Respected Friend

I am very glad to understand by yours of the 14th Current that you arrived in safety to Cassumbazar, and give you many thanks for remembering my troublesom[e] concerns, and doubt not but you will send all as soone as may bee, and if possible to bee found, the musroll² also with the rest.

The bad times rendered mee incapaable of shewing you that kindness here that might have merited your thanks, and I hope you will wholly impute it to my bad fortune that you were not entertained as you deserved and I desier'd.³

My Selfe and wife present you our respects. As yet not a word of good newes. When any comes you shall have it from

Your reall friend and Servant EDW. READE.

Pray present my respects to Mr Cole, Mr Naylor &c. friends.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant [In Cassu]mbazar.

1. Smith, who had been suspended during enquiries into his alleged irregular actions while Chief at Dacca, had apparently left Balasor. (See Letter CXLVIII) without permission.

2. Musroll (F. *muszrolle*, from Lt. Muss, muzzle), an obsolete term for the nose-band of a bridle.

3. There is no other record of Edwards's visit to Hugli in 1674. See note 6 Letter CXLIX.

LETTER CLIV.

(O. C. 3993).

Hugly, August the 22th 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Loveing freind

Yours of the 14th I received, but at the receipt of it was totally indisposed to Answer it, though A conveyance offered, labouring at that time under A Lash more Greivous than that at Dacca,¹ both in respect of its Vyolence and continuance and the Addition of A weak Stomach, all which then gave me some reason to fear that I might have here laid my bones. But (God be praised) I Am somewhat retrieved from the Vyolenter Assaults of it, and do hope I may dayly recover.

Mr. John Smith being Arrived here² and likely to stay some time, I shall desire you what you have Got ready or Can procure in the time of his stay to Send to him, and I will Get him to send them downe³ by the Sloop *Daniell and Thomas*, which is now Coming up with Daniel Roberts⁴ on her; who has bought Georges part⁵ and may possibly Returne in A Convenient time.

We shall be Going hence I suppose On Wednesday next. I hope therefore the Sugar⁶ may be Comeing. However, Send it Afterwards to Mr Smith; 18 Waterpots I have got, such as I Could (the Rascals being unwilling to Deviate from A Received way,⁷ though for A better), and if I can Get passage for them on this boat, Ile Send them now.

You may rectify the Account betwixt you and I by thus making me Debtor Ir. for what Given to the Dandees,⁸ 4 a. to the opeon at Mirdaupore,⁹ and some other small things at Cassambazar, of which your man can Give you An Account. This I had before forgot.

Heres An Affaire I would Offer to your Consideration, which if it Succeeded, might not be disadvantageous; *Vizt.*, the procury [o]f long pepper¹⁰ [? whet]her it may not be feisable with you there Or (As I Am

1. There are no letters extant from Thomas Pace to Richard Edwards dated from Dacca.

2. See Letter CLII.

3. To Balasor.

4. Daniel Roberts, a seaman, wrecked in the *Samaritan*, c. 1660, was entertained as a pilot in the Hugli river in February 1673. See *Diaries of Screegasham Master*, ed. Temple, I. 452, 453 (footnotes).

5. George Pearce's share of the goods provided by Edwards.

6. See Letter CXXX.

7. Accepted, generally adopted, method.

8. *Dandi*, boatman. See Letter CXVIII.

9. Messenger at Mirdaupur.

10. Long pepper, *Piper longum* (Th.) is cultivated in Bengal and S. India.

Advised¹ at Sindree¹ where your man is. If you find it probable to be got at Such rates, that with all charges and allowance for Drying it may come out at 6r. or 6: 8a. (if presently got)² here, I should believe it for your profit and would desire upon that Account to be Concerned with you in what you can Get and shall upon your Advise returne you what mony you shall think on my Part you may let out. But if there be none to be got of the Old, You may Endeavour At the first Coming of the New Crop³ which I suppose may then be procured in better quantities and easier rates. Of this As you Judge best Advise. This being all from

Your loveing freind

THO. PAGE.

My respects to Mr Vincent, Mr Marshall, Mr Littleton and his lady Mr Kuipe &ca freind[s].

Mr Lux⁴ and his wife present his respects to you.

[On reverse] The water pots will come by the Boat within 3 dayes.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant in Cassumbazar.

LETTER CLV.

GEORGE KNIPE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 3995).

[George Knipe—additional note. In the biography of George Knipe, preceding Letter CXXXVI, it will be noted that by his will his estate was divided in proportions of sixteenths. This is interesting, because such a division is in accordance with Indian customs whereby an estate is valued as a rupee and the proportions bequeathed are reckoned as so many annas to the rupee. The rupee is also the unit in land valuation.]

Cosumbazar 12 26th [August]⁵ 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Esteemed Friend

This is onely to advise you that your man is come from Sindree,⁶ haveing brought with him 84 ru: for our Accounts and 473 upon the Doctors⁷ ac-

1. Apparently intended for Singhiya, the English factory near Patna.

2. Procured at once.

3. The fruit of the Long Pepper is gathered when green, in January, and is dried in the sun.

4. William Lux, pilot. See Letters XCH, CXII, CXVII.

5. The month, which is torn away, is determined by a note on the back of the letter in Richard Edwards's writing.

6. Singhiya. See Letter CLIV.

7. Ralph Harwar. See Letter LXIV.

count. The latter Summe he hath delivered to Mr Naylor and the former to me. Your chank as yet are not sold, the price being not more then 13r. per hundred¹ for which he could have sold them all. Therefore if you think you shall be something long on your Voyage,² it would be best to write whether it shall be sold at that price or not, that your man may loose no time in returning thither.

Herewith I send you a letter from Hugly, being the needfull at present from

Your assured affectionate friend

Geo. KNIFE.

They are all well at home.³

Mrs Cole &ca. remember their services to Mrs Vincent &ca.

[Endorsed] To Mr Edwards

Marchant In Rajamaule or elce where.

LETTER CIVI.

JOHN SMITH TO RICHARD EDWARDS

(O. C. 3996).

Hugly August 26th 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Respected freind

few daies since I writt you hence,⁴ but have Received none from you a Long time, doe hope shall ere long in bw qid lwmn Mkinuorx pi qida tniaob oz rip O blmb plorc qid ewmn rip nwmh eopl aww elwr qid enop aww biw.⁵

In ballasore I Received a piece C[hin]te⁶ for Mr Kuipe, which I desire you acquaint him I have relivered to the peon⁷ that goes upon the boat.

1. This seems to refer to the consignment of conch-shells about which Edwards and Hervey had already had much correspondence. (See Letters CVII, CXIII, CXIV, CXVIII, CXXXV). Edwards sent the shells to Dacca where Hervey could not get a higher offer for them than Rs 11 per 100. In consequence, they were returned to Kāshimbāzār, and now, after more than a year, they were still unsold.

2. To Dacca. See Letter LXIV. From the endorsement, Kuipe seems to have been kept in ignorance of Edwards's destination, since Rajmahal is some distance up the river from Kāshimbāzār.

3. At Kāshimbāzār.

4. On the 19th August. See Letter CLII.

5. This passage, in the same cipher employed by Smith in Letters LXXXV, CXI, CXXV, CXL, CXLVIII, read:—"or is you hear According to your promise; if not, I shal think you were not real [in earnest] with mee when you writt mee soe."

6. The original has Cte, an unusual abbreviation for chint, i.e., chintz, which is apparently intended.

7. Messenger. See Letters XXX, CXXIV, &c.

Signor Vander Schepen¹ sends you auito Recardoes² and see doth

Your Assured freind to serve you

JOHN SMITH.

P.S. This should have bin sent forward long Since, but the boat and peon went without my knowledg. I heare now there is a Small English Ship³ arrived and brought nothing to sell either eatable or drinkable. I have had a feavour on me these eight daies and am now Scarce able to crawl. I have not sent Mr Knipes things.

Yours J. S.

Mr Vickers Died in his Voyage to England.⁴

Sept. 7th 1674 Hugly.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards
Merchant In [Cassimbazar.]

LETTER CLVIL

THOMAS PACE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 3997).

Hugly August the 26: 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Loving freind

My last¹ I hope you have received in which I wrote you at large, this being only to Advise you to receive of this Bont your 18 Water pots with Covers and to desire you to Send Per the first the black fringe, and if you have it done, the Silver⁵ (if it may be by you thought Safe) land Conveyance.⁶

We shall be Going hence to morrow. This with my Respects to Mr Vincent &ca. freinds is all at present from

Your Assured Loveing freind

THO: PACE.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards
Merchant In Cassambazar.

1. Geleyn van der Schepen, a merchant in the service of the Dutch East India Company. He was at Palma in 1680. See the *Dagh Register* for that year, pp. 365, 794.

2. Kind regards. Port, recados, greeting, salutation.

3. The *Adèle*, a pink or small sea-going ship, commanded by Captain William Gaich. See *Factory Records, Hugli*, vol. 4.

4. See Letter CLIV.

5. The waterpots are mentioned in Letter CLIV, but there is no reference either in that letter or in the previous one (Letter CXXXVIII) to black and silver fringes.

6. This sentence is confused. If "Per the first" be transposed to precede "land Conveyance," the meaning will be obvious.

LETTER CLVIII.

HENRY CARPENTER TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 3998.)

Singee le 1st September 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Respected Friend

This is now my third letter to you Since any from you, my last bareing date July 25th.¹ Your Silence causes much my admiration, there haveing to my knowledg 2 opportunitys Presented from your Factory since my first to you which accompanied your Chints &c. I hope I have not given any occasion on which you might Justly ground any disgust. My not in full Complying with your Expectation sooner will, I hope, obtaine your pardon when you shall consider how seldome opportunitys Present, Esspetially for things of Least Bulk.

I formerly wrot you for a few trifles but now am apt to doubt my Presumption was too great; yet it proceeded from the incouragement you have bene pleased often to give me that I might, when had occasion, make use of your friendship, and t'was on that I grounded my boldness.

I have now sent you according to order, *Vizt.*

	r	
2 peeces Chints	2:	
2 Girdles	-:12	These things goe inclosed in
2 Shashes ²	1:	Mr. Naylers fardle ⁴
1 Pr. Churraes ³	1:	
In 4 Baggs, Mds. 6: 20Sr.:		
Peeter ⁵ at 1r: $\frac{1}{2}$ a. per Md.	6:11	
[?Paid] Butta to make them		
charriary ⁶	-:3	
	rup. 11-10	

1. See Letter CL.

2. Turban-clotha. See Letters XCVI, CXXXVIII, CXLII.

3. H. *Churi*, a bracelet, bangle. See *infra*, where we find that these particular bracelets were to be made of rhinoceros horn.

4. The parcel for John Naylor.

5. John Marshall (for whom see Letter XXXII) in his *Notes and Observations* (Hart. MS. 4254, fol. 14) says that the Pains men in his day (1669-1677) was "40 seer or 78 pound; besides the custom of the place is to allow 2 seer in every maund," so that 6 was 20 seer of saltpetre would be equal to 530 2/5 lbs. av.

6. I would read this to mean "*dhatto*, allowance, to make them *chhari-ari*, a current term for giving a permit (*chhar* or *chhar-chittā*)."

You may imagine the reason why have sent you noe Hookaes¹ when you see Mr. Knipes stuff.

I have order'd Mr Naylor to pay you 12r: 7½s., the which pray demand of him and of Mr Knipe 4r: 1½s., and what there shall remaine after you are satisfied, please to receive towards the procureing those things I formerly desire[d], if you will please to give to give [*sic*] your self that trouble and mee that favour.

For Churaes of Rhynocerot horn, are none ready, but have order'd a pair to be made, the which you may expect by next if ready, have in mean time Sent you a pair of Ivory for your approbation.

Kanurree² is now extreame deare being at 3½r. Per Piece, and not good, therefore have sent none without farther order. If you would have trusted me with the Book I wrot for,³ I should speedely have return'd it you.

Noe more at Present, save wishes for your health, remaine Sir
at your Command

HENRY CARPENTER.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards
Merchant In Cassumbazar.

LETTER CLIX.

EDWARD READE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 3909.)

Hugly Sept: 5th: 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Respected Friend,

Before I received your last I guesd the true cause of your not sending the Sugar, which will come time enough if within a month you please to send it for mee to Mr. Smith here, as also the bambooes.⁴ I give you many thanks for procury of the reines and like very well of them. The Musroull⁵ shall returne, but must get one made like the 2 Joynts;⁶ the other now sent.

1. *Ar. huggah*, the Indian water-pipe, hubble-bubble.

2. *H. Kinari*, edge or border, generally of gold or silver lace; hence trimmings of gold and silver braid, &c.

3. See Letter CXLII.

4. Sugar and bamboo must have been among the "concerns" mentioned in Letter CLIII.

5. See Letter CLIII.

6. The writer's meaning is not plain. He seems to be referring to some special nose-band.

I am now for Ballasore where is an English ship arrived,¹ and if can serve you there, pray freely command

Your reall friend and Servant

ED. READE.

My time and papers short, which pray excuse.

Pray tell Mr Littleton I have delivered his Cossas² to Mr Smith

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassumbazar.

LETTER CLX.

THOMAS PACE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4003).

Ballasore, Sept. the 14th 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Loveing freind

I could not write you by the last, but I hope Mr John Smith has from Hugly given you the reason, I desiring him.

This Serves to Englose A letter for you from England, Arriveing with Captain Wildee in the *Lancaster*³ the 12th Instant. I shall take care to Get what you desired of me ready Against the next Conveyance and if you would have ought Else tis requisite you Send Your Order Assoone As possible. Liquors there are, but very deare I beleive, Every one both at the Coast⁴ and here being before the ships Arriva^l very bare, and therefore the more greedy.

I Am Still very much indisposed in my body and therefore very unfit for Any thing. Excuse me then that I cannot prolong, but rest

Your very Loveing freind

Tuo. PACE.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassambazar.

1. See Letter CLVI.

2. *Khasa*, fine muslin. See Letter VI.

3. Pace has confused the captains of the *Phoenix* and the *Lancaster*, two of the Company's ships which arrived in Bengal shortly after the *Advice* (See Letter CLVI). Captain John Wildey commanded the *Phoenix* and Captain Richard Goodlad the *Lancaster*.

4. Madras.

LETTER CLXI.

GEORGE WHITE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4005).

Mr Richard Edwards

Ballaore the 20. Sept. 1674.

Sir

My last was the 19 June,¹ in compliance with my promise wherein, I did endeavour what possible I could the Recovery of your Goods, but was disappointed of serving you either to your owne or my content; for though I did att last, by the Assistance of Mr Freeman,² prevaile for all Mr Langstones Remaines³ to be delivered to Mr Cholmley⁴ and my Selfe, he beeing employ'd for Mr John Smiths, as I for your conserne; yet upon surveigh of them I could find noething like what your note Specifies, save the parcell blew with gold stripes (which I suppos'd Mr Vickars had made use off),⁵ and that I sould to Mr Cholmley for the price you invoice it at. For your further Satisfaction in this Particular I here inclose the invoice of the 2 bayles, which you may compare with your own account to informe your selfe more fully thereof.

In all the time after Receipt of your last, I had noe Oppertunity of going to Metchlepatam,⁶ and was therefore necessitated to imploy Mr Freeman in the procury of the Particulars desired by you, which I have brought with me, and herewith Send you the invoice of them and intend they shall follow on the Companys Vessell suddenly intended for Hugly; their Amount is Pagos: 22:7:5. makes Rups. 90,⁷ out of which must bee deducted Rups. 17 for your blew parcell, soe there Remains due to me Rups. 73 which I desire you to invest in the Particulars mentioned in the inclosed note,⁸ for which, whatever more is Required, shall be readily repay'd you as you please to order, with due thanks for your kindness therein conferrd on

Sir, Your very affectionate Servant

GEO. WHITE.

[Endorsed]

To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassambazar.

1. See Letter CXIV.

2. Robert Freeman. See Letter XVII.

3. The effects of Francis Langston, deceased. See Letter CXIV.

4. Nathaniel Cholmley, the Company's diamond agent at Golconda. See *Diaries of Narayanaiah Master*, ed. Temple, II. 129a.

5. See Letter CXLV.

6. Masulipatam.

7. Reckoning the pagoda at 9s. and the rupee at 2s. 3d.

8. This memorandum does not exist.

LETTER CLXII.

SAMUEL BULLIVANT TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4008).

Singee, September 25. 1674.

Mr Richard Edwards

Respected Freind

Your last unto me was the [?], wherein you sent mee the bill for Rups. 300, since which have not heard from you. In my last to you I desired you would doe mee the kindness as to hasten Mr E. B. to dispose of that small Peece of Muske as soon as possible,¹ and this serves only againe to request said favour of you, if you have not already done it, for now (our p[er]ire boas[ter] being gone to Hugly), if it bee disposed of, wou[ld] desire you by their return to order Mr E. B. (as from your selfe) to invest it in copper or tin, if Procu[r]a[b]le, and send mee by said boates. Excuse this trouble, and if I can serve you here, freely command mee.

Not more at present, save wishes for your health and welfare, and remaine

Your reall freind to serve you

SAM. BULLYVENT.

[P.]S. Excuse this scrip² of paper, it being time of the wars³ and at present scarce. With my respects to Mr J. M., E. L.,⁴ Eton. freinds with you

Yours S. B.

P.S. Sir, bee pleased to dispeed the Letter to Mr Biam,⁵ as also the small Parcell and Letter to Mr Jordan⁶ in Ballasore by some safe conveyance.

Idem S. B.

[Endorsed] For Mr Richard Edwards
Merchant In Cassimbazar.

1. The message to Edmund Bagden about the musk was sent in Bullivant's letter of the 11th June (CXLIH). In the following letter, dated 4 August (CLI) he only expressed regret that it still hung on hand.

2. An obsolete term for a small piece of paper, usually with writing on it.

3. The Third Dutch War, concluded by the second Treaty of Westminster, 9 February, 1674, news of which had not then reached Bengal.

4. John Marshall and Edward Littleton.

5. John Byam, writer at Hugli, arrived in India in 1671. See *Diaries of Streygham Master*, ed. Temple, I. 324n.; II. 18, 293n.

6. Clement Jordan or du Jardin, son of one of the Company's surgeons at Fort St. George, will be noticed later on.

LETTER CLXIII.

JOHN BILLINGSLEY TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4011).

Ballaore October the 1st: 1674

[Mr.] Richard Edwards

Esteemed Friend

I now doe trouble you with two or three lines, not haveing heard from you a greate while. I must desire the faveour of you to provide mee a Silke hammock and one piece of Red Cuttanel¹ of the best couler as you can get, and 1 piece of white Taffatie,² and send downe by the first, with their cost, and I will order the money to bee paid there or here [to] any [o]ne [accor]ding to your [? desire], and in any thing that I can Sarve you in here, you may frely command mee.

I suppose you have heard of the death of John Vickars,³ Hee died of an impostium that brocke with in him, about the Cape.⁴

Pray let mee know what price vermillion will sell with you.⁵ Soe, haveing not more to trouble you at this time, but with mine and my wifes Service presented to you. Soe remaine

Your assured friend to Serve you

JNO: BILLINGSLEY.

[To] Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassumbazar.

LETTER CLXIV.

EDWARD READE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4015.)

Hugly October 5th: 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Respected Sir

I have received yours primo october and am very sorry you were hindred writeing before by such a distemper, which I pray God quit you of, and send you Perfect health.

1. Hind, *kattun*, silk selvedge, *kattani*, silk cloth. See Yule; *Hobson-Jobson*, s.v. *Cuttanoe*.

2. See Letters XIII, LXXIX, LXXXI, &c.

3. See Letter V.

4. *Impostume*, abscess.

5. Vermillion, a Chinese commodity, was a profitable investment for the English market.

I have received the Sugar and thanks you for it, as also the bamboos;¹ the sugar have Credited you for Mr. In.; the bamboos you doe not write the price, which pray put to the rest you promise to get hereafter.

The people here say these lie bamboos² are procureable about Raje Mauli,³ and ti's but sending for. If possible I would get a few—if but 200—almost at any reasonable charge. Pray try; and if a peon can goe to Pattana and bring some by boate, desier Mr Marshall from mee to take care herein by writeing and furnishing mony, if to 50 Rups., so as to returne in November: to Hugly; else twill be too late.⁴ They must be swith fashion,⁵ long and Slender.

I have not yet got a drop of any fresh liquors, but expect it Per first sloop, and then you shall have 12 or 14 gollons of mum,⁶ or any thing else

Your reall friend and Servant

EDW. READE.

I have delivered the bale: 1: P⁷ to Mr Smith.

[Endorsed] For Mr. Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassumbazar.

LETTER CLXV.

HENRY CARPENTER TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4016).

Singer le 8th October '74

Mr Richard Edwards

Sir, T'is now a long time since any from you, and I have soe often write [? to you, some] of which doubtless has attain'd your reception, that t'would be d[isagree]able both to you and me to resite the dates; hope 'ere this time you may have received the Severall things sent you on Boates with my Letter dated September 1st.⁸ In it I told you I had order'd Mr Nayler to pay you

1. See Letters CLIII, CLIX.

2. The Male (or solid) Bamboo, *Dendrocalamus strictus*, Hindi. *bass*, the commonest and most widespread of Indian bamboos. It does not occur in N. and E. Bengal and Assam: hence its rarity in Reade's eyes. See Watt, *Commercial Products of India*, p. 102; Howrey, *Countries round the Bay of Bengal*, ed. Temple, p. 249.

3. Rajmahal.

4. Too late to send to Europe that season.

5. That is, thin and flexible.

6. A kind of beer originally brewed in Brunswick. See Letter LVIII.

7. So marked.

8. See Letter CLVIII.

Dr. Ga. on my account.¹ I shall now desire you not to demand it of him, having writ him for some small effect[*] which that small summe will satisfy. I had thought long e're this to [h]ave received the Girdles and Mulmooll,² but especially the former. I had not troubled you, as it then stood between us, without an Urgent necessity, and I could have wished that you would sooner have let me know if would not have provided them. Pray if [? can], speedely send them, as I may forward them by ships.³

Your Rhynasseret Churn's are not yet ready.⁴ With kinde respects, remaine

Your humble servant

HENRY CARPENTER.

[Endorsed] [To M]r Richard Edwards
Merchant In Cassumbazar.

LETTER CLXVI.

JOHN SMITH TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4018).

Hugly October 12th 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Esteemed freind

I have writt you two Letters verry Lately,⁵ and some before that. I have had noe answer of them; wonder at your Silence. I am informed you have met with som[e ? trouble]. Am sorry to heare it from others, but should gladly heare the truth of it from you and an answer to my other Letters..

I rest

Your assured freind to Serve you

JOHN SMITH.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edward [sic].
Merchant In Cassumbazar.

1. The amount named in the letter of the 1st September is Rs. 13 7½ a.

2. See Letter CL.

3. So that I may forward them with the Europe bound ships.

4. See Letter CLVIII.

5. In August. See Letters CLII and CLVI.

6. This is the first reference to Edwards's unfortunate entanglement with a native woman, of which more anon.

LETTER CLXVII.

EDMUND BUGDEN TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4021).

Hugly, 15th October 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Respected freind

from Mr George White received the small bundle now sent by Mr Anthony Smith,¹ it being directed to Mr White, which made Mrs Reade open it, thinking it had been for hir; at present remember not elce at Present.

Loveing freind, I must go bare foote if you do not help me suddenly. At Present remember not elce, so with my kinde respects to you, Mr Knipe, &c. freinds,

I remain

Your assured freind and Servant

EDMD. BUGDEN.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassambazar.

LETTER CLXVIII.

GEORGE WHITE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4022).

Ballasore: October 16. 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

I writt you the needfull few wayes after my Arivall.¹ Since which I Delivered to Mr Edmund Bugden the Parcell of Chints, &c., brought for your Account, whose departure was so sudden that I could not Accompany them with an Advice; however, doubt not his freindly care in forwarding them to your hand, and hope this will find them safe in your possession, whereof at your leisure I desire you will please to acquaint me, as alsoe whether I may depend on you for your provision of the Particulars Specified in a note inclosed in my former.

1. Anthony Smith, who was sent out to Fort St. George as a soldier, was "entertained" as a dyer in October 1674. See *Diaries of Stregnum Master*, ed. Temple, I. 407.

2. At Balasor. See Letter CLXI.

I heartily wish your continued good health and prosperity, and in whatever I can be any wayes Serviceable, pray most freely command the best Endeavours of Sir,

Your very affectionate Friend and servant

GEO. WHITE.

[Endorsed] To Mr. Richard Edwards
Merchant In Cassambuzar.

LETTER CLXIX.

THOMAS PACE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4023).

Ballasore October the 16: 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Loveing freind

Yours of the 25 last came to my hand, and I have Sent you Another letter Since.¹ I am Sorry my Illness has rendred me so Turdy in what you formerly desired, As also in Some measure incapable [*sic*] of Endeavouring for what you have now desired, though not wholly As to Endeavours, yet those to little purpose, for I have Got but 12 quarts of Canary² for my Selfe, nor Could I Get those, had not my illuess induced those that Spared it me to beleive it A kindness. Indeed, whole Chests I might buy that were mixt with Claret and rhenish,³ but that I thought beyond my Allowance.⁴ As for Paper I Can Get none At all, nor Quills: powder perhaps I may, and it may be Shot, but no Lanthorne, no lace more than 5 yds. Of the Small⁵ I Gott of Gabriell,⁶ that being all in the Godowne. Mats I have a good while bespo[ke b]ut beleive you might mistake in the lengths and breadths of your pair you Gave me in remembrance,⁸ there being few made So Little as 6 coveds long and 2½ broad.

1. There is no letter extant from Pace between the 14th September (Letter CLX) and the 16th October, 1674.

2. Canary wine, a light sweet wine from the Canaries.

3. Rhine wine.

4. The sum allotted to me to spend.

5. Used in its obsolete meaning of "fine."

6. Gabriel Townsend, Second at Hughli, who was then preparing to return to England. See Letter LXX.

7. Warehouse. See Letter XCIV.

8. As a token, reminder.

Indeed, I have had So Much Illness Since I Come, which yet continuing, that it may be in Some measure Excusable if by Slackness In procuring what you desired I have disoblged you, but if it please God to Grant me health, I hope I shall be Capable Either out of my owne store or what I may procure to Serve you with many of those things you desire.

About Long pepper. According as you write, twill be time Enough hereafter to Advise, though I would have you hold those in hand from whom it is procurable, for it is certainly a Commodity here advantageous, if procurable at those rates by A former Advised.¹ As for the Use of mony this shipping, tis likely to be to little profit, and what ever bought before hand upon A great Adventure,² whether vendible with those people the cheife [?] of which deliwer their mony (as usuall) to the Cheife Person and what may be Expected from the fickle humour of Others (when Goods On hand), you may Judge.³

I have, According to your desire, delivered your remembrances. Pray remember me likewise to all with you and Excuse my hast, the conveyance b[?]y who]m I send being gone and this to follow

from Your [hum]ble Servant

[Tho: PAGE]

[Endorsed] To Mr. Richard Edwards.

Merchant In Cassambazar.

LETTER CLXX.

EDMUND BUGDEN TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4026).

Hugly the 29th October 1674.

Mr Richard Edwards

Respected freind

Yours the 24th current have received, and am glad you have your token or fardle.⁴ I sent you, and thank you for your Remembrance of mee for Slip-pers. I am very buissy, so cannot enlarge more than tell you that Mr. Smith

1. See Letter CLIV.

2. Hazard.

3. The meaning of this confused sentence seems to be that the lesser among the Company's servants had little chance of profitable investments without incurring great risk, their superiors absorbing the best markets.

4. Parcel. See Letter CLXVII.

remembers his Love to you, and this day he departs hence¹ and expect the *Advice*² before the factory. Not else fro³

Your assured freind to co[mmand]

EDWD. BRIDEN.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassambazar

LETTER CLXXI.

SAMUEL HERVY TO RICHARD EDWARDS.⁵

(O. C. 4027).

In Decca October 29th 1674

Brother Edwards

My last was [.] came yours of the 21st. Your Bunde Affaire⁴ looks not ill no [.] Durbar [?] frend. The Damn'd Dog Bulchund⁵ and I agreed [?not, beca]use I gave not 1100 rs. without a writing to secure from further [? ill]. Now this night he Departs, takeing the party along as [.]. With him you may end it cheaper if y[ou] have the Luck [to] wheadle the mother as well as you have f—the Daughter. Be [s]ure you now conclude it soe as never to rise up in judgment ag[ainst] you]. You may sett your heart at Rest that it will not be [? brought up] againe By B.⁶ who besides has s[ome] feare in h[is] ? heart unless] his purpose be Suckan-nasan⁷ I [hat] if sh[e] beca[me] of his wee would Complayne [.] of this in [.] Howe]ver, you must be sure to [? employ] a deale of [? caution at] first, but with discretion all [may] be husht [.] re. being all he would take [.] And if you Can possible.

1. John Smith had been summoned to Balasor by Walter Clavell to assist in the lading of the Company's ships for Europe. See *Factory Records*, Hugli vol. 4

2. The *Advice* pink (See Letter CLVI, note 7) had been piloted up to Hugli, and her consort, the *Phoenix* and *Lancaster*, were awaiting their cargoes in Balasor Road.

3. This letter is badly damaged and several portions are torn away.

4. Affair with a woman of loose character. Hind. *randi*.

5. Bal Chand Rai, governor of Murshidabad.

6. Bal Chand.

7. Hervey appears to mean to use the Hindi expression *sukhan-na-shannai*, heedlessness, and the sense would then be, "unless he is reckless."

send it to Hugly [. . . .] to Mr. [? Clavell] for I much doubt I shall not be able [? to take Cossi] mbazar in my Way.¹

I am

Your reall ready friend and Brother

P. S. [illegible]

SA. HERVY.

[Endorsed] To Mr. Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassimbazar.

LETTER CLXXII.

WALTER CLAVELL TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4029).

[Mr Richard] Edwards

Ballasore November the 2d. 1674

[Esteemed] friend

I have yours of the 20th October, and before its arrivall had written [? to you about] the business.² Should have been glad that when it was brought to so [? good an end] as one thousand Rupies that Bulchand³ had been closed with, and that [? the business] at that expence had been taken up,⁴ but hitherto it is possible I [? am in some] lack and not have the business rightly stated to mee as it hath [? been on o]ther occasions. However, you may bee sure that if there bee no [. . . .] or before the going away of the ship then as yet hath come [. . . .] any part of a generall letter [. . . .] in a particular, tis not alwaies credited; therefore, bee assured all the favour and right I can doe you [in] that or any other business, I will doe it,⁵ and according to my ability approve [my] self

Your assured friend to Serve you

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

WALTER CLAVELL

Merchant In Cassumbazar.

1. The gist of this letter seems to be that Edwards, who had entangled himself with a woman in whom Bal Chand was interested, might placate the injured Governor by a heavy bribe, and that Hervey was of opinion that Bal Chand would keep quiet lest his own lapses should become public property.

2. This letter does not exist.

3. Bal Chand Rai. See Letter CLXXI.

4. Amicably arranged.

5. Some words are missing in this part of the letter. Clavell seems to be saying that if no further complications arise during the settlement of Edwards's affair with Bal Chand, he will not inform against Edwards in the General Letter to England. Further, Clavell encourages Edwards by telling him that the Court will probably disregard any private information of his misdoings. The way in which both his equals and superiors in rank strove to shield Edwards from the consequences of his mistake shows the esteem in which he was held by his associates.

LETTER CLXXIII.

SAMUEL BULLIVANT TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

Singee November 4. 1674

[Mr.] Richard Edwards

Esteemed Friend

Yours of the 15 past month I received, and see what you write us to my Muske¹ and Returne you thanks for your care therein and hope shortly to have newes of its sale, although am advized likewise tis but at a low rate at present in England. However, soe small a Parcell may Perhaps Find a Chapman;² if it bee sold, I againe confirm what formerly ordered, that you would invest it in some thing [? that] may turne to some advan[tag]e he[re a]nd send it by our boates.

Herewith I returne you your booke of Osborn,³ and beg your pardon for detaining it so long after my arrivall here. I lent it Mr J. C.⁴ to Peruse, who was so much taken with it that hath kept it ever since. I should be glad to heare some particular newes from Europe of the peace with [. . .], how concluded (I meane the Articles), having only in generall newes of our Honourable peace.⁵ If you have them in Your Factory, please to send a copy of them to mee.

I am very Sorry [for] your ill fortune and doe really condole with you for [? it], and heartily wish you a good issue out of all your troubles. This Country is now growne to that height of villany and exactions from all Governours, that wee shall not after a while bee able to live in it securely, these people studying and contriving all wayes to get us into their power that soe they may force money from us.⁶

I Returne you thanks for dispeeding my Letters and Parcell. I would desire you to buy mee six breeches strings white, such as I bought when with you, of 4 for a Rupee, and send them Per primo conveyance (having not one left of what brought up with mee). I know not if I am indebted to you.

1. See Letters CXXXIX, CXLIII, CLI, CLXII.

2. Used in its obsolete sense of purchaser, customer.

3. The allusion is probably to the work called *Advice to a Son*, published in 1666, one of the most popular of the writings of the time. Its author was Francis Osborne (1593-1659), master of horse to William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke.

4. Job Charnock.

5. The peace with the Dutch concluded by the second Treaty of Westminster (See Letter CLXII n.3). The principal conditions were that the Dutch should pay £300,000 to Charles II. and should respect the English flag. Further, all possessions obtained before the war were to be restored.

6. An allusion to the hush money paid to Bal Chand. See the two previous letters.

If soe, I shall on notice from you Remitt it. You sent mee some things you did not prise, *Viz.*, silk raines and strings for the horse, and 2 white girdles flowred, and therefore cannott exactly tell how my account stands; at your leasure pray inform mee.

I have not more at present, save tender of my due Respects to your selfe Etca. freinds in your Factory, and subscribe

Your reall freind to serve you

SAM: BULLYVANT.

[If y]ou have any store of flint by you, [pray] send mee a Piece of a scer,¹ being in [want] of it for my fowling-[piece].

Idem S. B.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards
Merchant In Cassambazar

LETTER CLXXIV.

WALTER LITTLETON TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4032).

[Apart from the letter given below, I have found only two references to Walter Littleton in the Records of the East India Company, and all efforts to trace him elsewhere have failed. He may have been a son or relative of the Walter Littleton who was in India some twenty years earlier. This man, to whom there are references from January 1651 to July 1653, was employed by the King of Golconda and subsequently as a servant of the Company, but there is no record of the confirmation of his appointment by the Court of Committees, nor any note of his return to England or death in India.

The writer of the letter, whom I cannot connect in any way with Edward Littleton, the Company's servant at Kasimbazar, was a merchant and probably also the owner of a trading vessel. From the fact that he learnt of the death of John Vickers while he was in England (See *infra*), it seems as if he had recently returned to India and had taken up his residence at Balasor. In 1676 his name appears in a list of Freemen, *i.e.*, Englishmen not in the Company's service, at Balasor, who were summoned by Streynsham Master on the 15th December and ordered to reside at Fort St. George and not to "build or buy houses in any other place." Compliance with these restrictions procured them the right to trade "to and fro from any Ports or places in the Indies, expected [*sic*] to Tonqueen, Formosa and the Southward of the line, and to have the "benefitt of the Companyes protection in all places."

1. About 2 lbs. avoirdupois. See Letter X.

The next reference to Walter Littleton is thirteen years later (December, 1689) when he is mentioned as a member of a Grand Jury at Fort St. George. After this date I have found no allusion to him. See *O.C.* 2199, 2208, 2257, 2332; *Diaries of Streynsham Master*, ed. Temple, II. 75 (where, in a footnote, Walter Littleton is confused with Robert, brother of Edward Littleton); *Madras Mayor's Court Proceedings*, 1689, Records of Fort St. George.

[Ballasore 4th November 1674].

Mr Richard Edwards

Loving and good Sir

I make bold to trouble you with this few Lines, which is in time of necessity, as the Reprobates use God Almighty, say there prayers when they stand in need of his help, soe I reckon that I am unworthy to receive any kindnesse from you for not keeping correspondence with such a good friend as your selfe (which I can doe noe lesse but beg my pardon for my Omission.

Sir, I thought seriously that I should have the happines to kisse your hands at Cassumbuzar about 26 daies agoe: (I have not soe much time to let you understand of my bad successe that was happen to me, goeing aboard the *Ganges* in Ballasore roade),¹ and if you please to inquire of Mr Marshall I suppose you may understand. Now Mr Clavell desire me to assist him in his Particular business (by reason Mr Jourden² is going to Hugly).

If you please to send m[ee 4] or 6 paire of Breeches strings (? white, whereof) 2 for a Rupee and 2 peeces of fine stuffs, silke. Likewise if you please to let me know the price of Raw silk, you will doe me a great kindnes, and therefore (without Apology) I assure you if any time you can think wherein I may be serviceable to you, you may freely command me, as I am, Sir

Your Loving friend and humble servant

WALTER LITTLETON.

Pray, Sir, send me 2 paire of Cassumbuzar Sleepers.³ I doe assure you I am very sorry to understand (when I was in England) of Mr Vickers death,⁴

1. The writer apparently met with some accident when about to sail to Hugli in the Company's sloop *Ganges*. There are no Consultations or Letter Books extant for this period to elucidate his remark.

2. Clement Jordan. See Letter CLXII.

3. Slippers made in Kasimbazar. Edwards was kept busy in supplying these to his friends. See Letters V, XXXVII, XLII, XLIV, XLIX, I, IJI.

4. For the death of John Vickers at sea, see Letters V, CLXIII.

who was a deare friend to me. My humble service to Mr Vincent [and] Mr Marshall. Desire you, if you doe intend to send those things above mentioned, should be before the ships departure, rest,

W. L.

Ballasore the November 4th 1674

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards
Merchant In Cassumbuzar

LETTER CLXXV.

HENRY CARPENTER TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4034).

Singe le [10]¹ November 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Deare Friend

Yours of 15th past month I have received, at sight of which I was much surprized, not haveing soe long had any from you, the which cause I could not possablely have Imagin'd, had you not by yours Inform'd me, the which I could not read without being as much concern'd as were you my own Brother, and for mine of 25th September,² which you are pleased to tearm raylery, I beg your pardon if any thing unseemly was Contain'd in it. I know not what simple idle [?] thoughts then possess'd me, but after its departure I wish'd it againe in my Clutches. I must confess I gave my pen the more liberty, supposeing it might have Undergone the same fate of miscaryage I thought severall before had done, not heareing in so long a time from you.

But to your Unfortunate business. He assure you I knew nothing of till a very few dayes before yours arriv'd, and that was by a Cossid³ which came from your Factory. To goe about to lett you know how much it troubles me would be both Vain and Idle, it being Insignificant to the Salving your sore. Though pity is generally the best help a man in trouble shall receive from his common Friends, I could wish it lay in my power to serve you in some kind or other in it, which if did, you should quickly see me step out of this common road, and appear in that of your most devoted adjutors.⁴

1. On what evidence this letter has been allotted in the Records, to the 10th November does not appear:

2. This letter is not extant.

3. *Kerid*, messenger.

4. A now obsolete term for helper, assistant.

But what cannot be cured must be endured. I cannot think any English man can be so base and Unnaturall as to give an information of that which tends not at all to Company advantage or disadvantage.¹ All the trouble and misfortune is yours, and for any to ad to that by soe base an Action (though I feare we have too many Brethren that though unconcern'd love to fish in troubled waters) would render himself an uncharitable Divil. In my opinion your only way is to bare Up and not be discouraged, seeing [the] thing is past recall and will I hope be but a 9 dayes [wonder]. You are not the first that has fallen into Lobbs pound.²

I am glad you have received those things I sent you. I shall take care to procure you a Carpett according to order. Pray when can, without ading to your present trouble, forward me those things writ for. You have Deare Friend the present needful from

Your reall Friend and Servant

HENRY CARPENTER.

P.S. If not too late, pray forbare the girdles, only send a good Mallmoll.³

Yet, if they are ready, rather then you should Loose by it, i'll take them; they may be of after use, though now of none.

Idem H. C.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassumbazar

If absent pray give this Conveyance to him.

LETTER CLXXVI.

GEORGE WHITE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4035).

Hugly November 11. 1674

Worthy Freind

After many longing Expectations, yours of the 24 past came yesterday to hand, and truly I am very heartily concern'd for the unfortunate misadventure that has soe discompos'd you from your exact Method of correspondence, and passionately wish you disintreagu'd⁴ from soe unhappy an imbroyle.

1. Carpenter is endeavouring to reassure Edwards that his unfortunate entanglement will not be reported to the Court of Committees in England.

2. Lob's pound signifies, prison, lock-up, and figuratively, an entanglement, difficulty. The *Oxford English Dict.* derives the word from the Dutch *lobbe*, Norwegian, *lubb*.

3. See Letter CL.

4. Disentangled, happily freed from. Intrigue is here used in its (now rare) sense of 'to entangle.'

The Particulars I writt to you for were recommended to my care by several Friends at the Coast,¹ and Either by you or Mr Marshall I depend to bee furnishd with them, that I may not incurr the censure of an unkind disapoyntment; and therefore what of them Mr Marshall sends me not, pray Endeavour to procure and send me to Ballasore in tyme to bee forwarded by the shippes; but I suppose tis needless now to mind you of it, hoping you have allready gratified this my desire.

Pray in your next send me a copy of Mr Freemans Invoyce of the Particulars he bought for you, I haveing omitted to Enter it. I am in expectation suddenly to Meet my Brother Marshall² at Nuddeah³ where, if't may conveniently bee, I shou'd be very joyfull to Enjoy your company, for I really am, Sir,

Your very affectionate Freind and Servant

G. WHITE

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards
Merchant In Cassambuzar

LETTER CLXXVII.

GEORGE KNIPE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(G. C. 4038).

Hugly the 13th November 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Affectionate friend

I arrived here a tuesday at noone, since which time have not had opportunity of writeing to you. This is onely to desire you, if possible procurable, to send 50 mds. of Tessinghe Sugar,⁴ for it beare a very good price here, likewise the lung pepper. Chittermull⁵ will lett you have the Sugar at the first word, who would have me take 100 mds. along with me and to pay him in 3 months time. If he be still in the same opinion, pray accept of his proffer; Likewise that you woud send a piece of white Taffitie and a piece of silke lungees.⁶ This is all at present, onely reme[m]bring my respects to Mr Marshall, Mr Cole, &c. friends, remaine

Your very reall and loveing Friend

GEO: KNIPE

1. Madras.

2. The term 'brother' seems to be used only as a mark of friendship.

3. Nadia, on the Hugli, between Kasimbazar and the town of Hugli.

4. This place, which is variously spelt Tessinghe, Tisinda, Tassinolla, Treaindd], etc., is not now identifiable. It appears to have been situated in the neighbourhood of Kasimbazar and was noted for its sugar. See *Diaries of Streygham Master*, ed. Temple, I. 418n.

5. Chitar Mal. See Letter CXLIX.

6. For taffety and lunggi, see Letters XIII, XVII, LXXIX, etc.

I hope by this time your poor girl is with you againe and that your troubles are at an end. Mine is very well, giving her ducy and Salam,¹ but as big as she can tamble, being past bedding for 2 or 3 months.

Idem G. K.

P.S. Tell Mr Peachy² I have sent his chest to Ballasore, and Richard Mosely that mine and his goods are on board of a *porgoo*³ for Ballasore, onely staying to see the new moone [p]ast.

Pray lett the Sugar be sent downe with all possible Speed.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassumbuzar

LETTER CLXXVIII.

EDWARD READE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4040).

Hugly November 18th 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Esteemed Friend

I am very sensible of the Greate troubles lately unluckely fallen upon you and most heartily wish you well quit of them, and then I hope you will bee better capacitated to doe your owne and friends business as you desier.

I have received Mr Hervys hat, and will leave it for him, also have returnd you the case by Mr Kuipe, and acquainted Mr White what you writ.

Excuse hast, being [up]on dispatch of the *Arrivall*.⁴

I am

Your reall friend and Servant

ED. READE

[Endorsed] For Mr. Richard Edwards

Merchant [In Cassambazar].

1. Pers. *du's* and *salam*; compliments, literally, benediction and salutation.

2. For Richard Mosely and Jeremy Peachey, see Letters CXXXVI and CXXXVIII.

3. A barge. See Letter LXXX.

4. One of the Company's sloops. See Letter XCVIII.

LETTER CLXXIX.

GEORGE KNIPE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4041).

In Hugly the 16th November 1674.

Mr Richard Edwards
affectionate friend

My last to you was of the 13th current wherein write you about sending downe 50 mds: of Tessinghe Sugar.¹ Pray send me downe 50 mds: more assone as possible you can, in baggs, at their usuall rate, for I am to have, assone as arrivall here, 11r: the bag. Therefore if Chittermull will not performe his promise,² pray by all means Truck couries for it.³ Pray be speedy in what you doe, for it must be here 15 daies after this date.

This is all at present from

Yours to Command

Geo. KNIPE.

[In ? Richard Edwards's writing] to G. P. that had sent letter to Mr V. but⁴

[No endorsement.]

LETTER CLXXX.

GEORGE WHITE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4042.)

[Hugly 19th November 1674.]

Sir

Mr Reade has shewn me the postscript of your last letter to him, advising you have writt me via Ballasore, whether I am this Evening returning, and hope to find your letter there, depending allsoe upon your kindness in furnishing Every Particular specified in my former Remembrance, to which I desire you to add 4 pair handsome Moores slippers,⁵ which is all the trouble I shall now give you, and request that I may have some Opportunity to retribute⁶ your favour by beeing imploy'd in your Commands at the Coast, if I can there bee any Way Usefull to you.

1. See Letter CLXXVII.

2. In his previous letter Knipe stated that Chitar Maj was ready to provide the sugar and to give three months credit for it.

3. Thomas Bowrey, who was in Bengal two years later, remarked that couriers "passed very current by tale" and that 3,200 couriers went to the rupee at that date (*Countries round the Bay of Bengal*, ed. Temple, p. 218 and L.N.).

4. G. P. stands for George Peacock and Mr V. for Matthias Vincent. The sentence is unfinished.

5. Slippers such as those worn by Mahumudians at Kasimbazar. See Letter CLXXIV.

6. Repay.

I am very glad to hear there is such good hopes of a speedy conclusion to your late unhappy misadventure, soe Wishing you continued health and prosperous Success, I take leave, Remaining Unfeignedly, Sir

Your Very Affectionate Servant

GEO. WHITE.

Hugly November 19th 1674.

[Endersed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchan[t] In Cassambuzar

LETTER CLXXXI.

THOMAS PACE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4043).

Ballasore, November 20th 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Loving freind

Yours of the 28th I have received, As also the Parcels therein mentioned of Mr Vincent and Mr Smi[th]. Your 2 pieces¹ Cannot yet Sell, but shall still Endeavour their Sale; which if prove ineffectuall, shall return them According to your Order.

I thank you for your trouble in the procury of what you Advise, and shall Attempt, though perhaps not with that Success, for what you desire out of the Ships,² and shall as you order, forbear the Arack.³

I am Sorry for the trouble On you and hope it may be put to An end, which if it may not Overmuch discompose you, I would desire you for our Common Advantage to prosecute what before I Advised you of, *vizt.*, the Procury of Long pepper⁴ and for that End I shall now returne to you Rupee. 400 for my Part, and will do more if you Advise the procury of any greater quantity is feizable; And as fast as you Can get it in to Send it for Hugly to Await the Opportunity of the Sloopes.⁵ I Shall advise you Per the next to whose Care you may Commend it there. Mr Reade &ca. Comeing thence, there will be possibly none of Your Acquaintance to whom you may with Security Consigne it, but in A short Time I shall be Certifyed whom of my freinds from this place may be there at its Comeing, of whom I will Advise you.

If I Can (As its Possiblle I may) obtain as much of Mr Clavell As to go

1. What kind of material is intended does not appear.

2. The Company's ships from Europe, the *Phoenix* and *Lancaster*. See Letter CLXX.

3. 'Arak, spirits. See Letters II, CXXXVII.

4. See Letter CLIV.

5. That is, to await transport of the consignment by the Company's sloop to Balasor and thence to the ships then lading for England.

to the Coast (for my healths Sake in the Change of Aire) on the Companys Pink,¹ to returne by the Same hither, then the Abovesaid Comodity may prove [mor]e Advantageous in Carrying it thither, and the larger quantity will Commend² the profit; but of this Silence, lest it Succeed not.

I hope the Engageing in buisiness Advantageous may, if not Cleare totally, yet in Some measure divert from, Or Envigorate to beare the better, YOU your distraction from your present trouble, ME mine from my illness, to both which that there may be a good End is the wishes and desires of him that resents³ your Equally as if his owne discomposure, being

Your truly Affectionate friend

Tuo: PACE

If you Can Spare me couple of Small neate Pattana Bambo's⁴ and send them downe before the ships [?sail, you] will do me a Great kind[ness].

[Idem] T.: PACE

Pray procure for me 1 bale of Tessenda Sugar.⁵ You may receive the 400 rs. of [Mr] Marshall, he b[e]ing Ord[ere]d by Mr Vincent t[o p]ay it you.

Idem T P

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassambazar

LETTER CLXXXII.

SAMUEL BULLIVANT TO RICHARD ERWARDS.

(O. C. 4049).

Pattana December 13. 1674

[Mr Richard Edwa]rds

Respected Freind

Having this oportunity by [. . .] an Armenian, would not omitt giving [. . .] these few lines. My last unto you was the [. . .] desired you to favour mee so far as to [?endeavour] to sell that small Parcell of Muske.⁶ If [before] this tis done, should bee glad to heare it [?and now] desire you to invest it in what you thinke [?money] shall bee but a smal gainer by it.

[. . .] from venturing any thing [in Ballasore (unless] wee have Returnes). However, if you [?are pleased] to send any goods hither or to

1. The *Admirer*, pink. See Letters CLVI, CLXX.

2. Pace seems to mean:—"The larger the quantity, the bigger will be the profit."

3. Feels.

4. See Letter CLXIV.

5. See Letter CLXXVII.

6. Bullivant is referring to his letter of the 4th November. See Letter CLXXIII.

Remitt [[?]money to b]ee invested in Ophium, Maske, or any [[?]such goods],
 ahall use my best indeavours to in[[?]vest it]. This Armenian is a friend of
 Coja¹ [. (w)home Mr Marshall hath seen), who is [[?]now at] our
 house, and commends him to Mr [. . .].

I pray my kind respects [[?]as well to him] and Lady, Eten, freinds with
 you. No [more at prese]nt save kind love to your selfe, wishing [[?]you health]
 and happiness, and an happy issue out of [[?]your troubles], and subscribe

Your reall freind to serve you

SAM: BULLYVANT

[Endorsed] [To Mr] Richard Edwards
 Merchant [I]n C[assu]mbazar

LETTER CLXXXIII.

THOMAS PACE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4053).

Ballasore, December 31: 1674

Mr Richard Edwards

Loveing freind

After so many letters of mine that I can Scarce have Any more than
 One returne, and that in Answer to former Ones, the later being either not
 received Or not of Consequence enough (though I Supposed they might) to
 produce regard,² would make me believe my Selfe Guilty of losing Your
 freindly Correspondence by Some default on my Part, did I not upon examina-
 tion find all your letters answered; and that I could not Serve you in what
 desired and intended As I promised, I can without untruth Excuse my Selfe
 by my Owne losse of these very Conveniences you desired, it being the General
 fate,

But I Somewhat more Admire³ that when you had Given me encourage-
 ment to hope you Could Procure Long pepper for our Joint Account, and I
 had remitted you by Mr Marshall 400 rs. for my Part⁴ ever since the 19th of
 November,⁵ that I Can not hear from you whether you can effect Ought in
 this matter. Pray be So kind At least to let me hear from you what you
 have done or can do in this Affaire, the time for the Good Sale of the Above-
 said being like to end with this Monsoone,⁶

Your ps. of Stuffe being not Able to Sell, I have returned by Mr Vincent.

1. Khwaja? probably also an Armenian. It is a pity that both these names are obliterated.

2. To merit attention.

3. Wonder.

4. See Letter CLXXXI.

5. The letter referred to is dated 20th November, 1674.

6. Here used in the sense of 'season.'

And though I have been So unfortunate not to Serve you in these matters you desired of So little moment,¹ Yet I desire you would endeavour what You can as to what I gave you in remembrance at Parting, and have Since desired. And be pleased to take notice to Mr Peacock that I have not received the 20 rs. You ordered him to pay, neither of him nor his Order, Mr Reade bringing it not to Account.

Though I have lost all my powder and Am by that meanes incapable of Serving my Selfe or you, I have notwithstanding got A promise from A friend that he will from Hugly Send you up Some and Advise you of it.

Pray let me have A line or two from you, and if you have Any Of those ps. of Stuffe ready you mentioned in your last, be pleased to Send, as Also the Hanger,² directing them, As Also (if procured) the long pepper, to Mr Reade. By this you will Oblige

Your truly loveing friend

Tuo: Pace.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassambazar

LETTER CLXXXIV.

GEORGE KNIPE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4074).

Hugli[s] the 3d February 1674/5

Mr Richard Edwards

Loveing freind

Wee arrived here the 30th ultimo, Since which have but little trade, onely desiring you (though I know tis a great trouble) to look after my friend with you, hoping by this time that she is laid on her cot.³ For the trouble you are at, I will willingly pay double the Same if it lies in my power. Pray present my Umble Service to Mr Vincent, Mr Marshall, Mr Littleton, your Selfe, Mr Cole, &c, being theirs and

Yours most ready Servant to Command

GEO: KNIPE

The Dutch Japan ships are arrived.⁴

Id. G. K.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassambazar

1. These unimportant concerns.

2. A short sword, originally hung from the belt.

3. *Kant*, bedstead. See Letter XXII.

4. The Dutch fleet bringing a cargo from Japan.

LETTER CLXXXV.
 GEORGE KNIPE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.
 (O. C. 4078).

Hugly the 15 February 1674/5

Mr Richard Edwards

Affectionate friend

Yours of the 10th Current is come to hand, wherein understand of my
 ——— being delivered of a girl,¹ which is neither good nor bad newes,
 butt rather of the two bad, for I would rather had a boy. Maes eu que logo
 fese povre quenglado.²

I am very glad you have cleared my Account with Hardass Nanger.³ I
 would with all my heart send you some money for my expences with you, but
 that I have scarce 10 ru. by mee at Present, but in short time shall, and then
 will Supply you.

This is all at present. Desiring still to continue our free and Brotherly
 freindship. So remain

Your assured reall friend to Comand

GEO: KNIPE

[. . .] my Cozen &ca. friends.⁴

Idem G K

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards
 Merchant In Cassumbazar

LETTER CLXXXVI.
 THOMAS PACE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.
 (O. C. 4079).

Ballasore, February the 2[1st]⁵ 1674/5.

Mr Richard Edwards

Loveing freind

I hope that by Mr Dar[?ley⁶ when] he Comes I may heare from you.
 Otherwise twould Give me A Suspicion that there may be Some mistake⁷

1. See the notice of Knipe (Letter CXXXVI) for his legacy to this daughter who was named Rebecca. She married Robert Fox at Fort St. George on the 1st September, 1691.

2. But then I may have been a poor! The last word does not appear in any Portuguese or other dictionary that I have consulted.

3. Hira Das Nagar.

4. Most of the postscript is illegible and there is no clue to the identity of the "Cozen."

5. The figure following the 2 is illegible. The letter has been calendared 22nd February, but an endorsement in Richard Edwards's hand gives the 21st February. This is the last letter extant from Pace. He died shortly afterwards.

6. This partly illegible word seems to be Darley. Joshua Darley was appointed "Chaplain to the Bay" on the 13th Feb., 1674 (*Court Book*, vol. 28, p. 195).

7. Misunderstanding.

betwixt Us, but hoping, I would desire You, if the Sward¹ be done, to Send it, As Also A white piece of Stuff I desired of you that may be ready. I would Also desire to know what I must Credit you for those things I received of you. I ho[pe] you have Satisfyed Your Selfe of George Peacock that [he] paid me not the 20 rs.²

This is all from

Your Loveing freind

THO: PACE

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards
Merchant In Cass[am]bazar

LETTER CLXXXVII.

JEREMY PEACHIE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4081).

[Jeremy Peachie (or Peachey) was elected writer on the 25th October 1672. His securities, approved on the 15th November, were "John Peachie, Doctor of Physick, and Francis Eads, Apothecary." He arrived in India on the 27th June 1673, was sent to Bengal, and was employed at Balasor and Hugli until November 1676 when he was settled at the latter place. In 1677 he was guilty of acts of irregularity. He "picked the lock" of the "Water Gate" between ten and eleven at night, "the Porters haveing after 9 a Clock brought him the Keyes as usually," and went off without permission. His offence was the greater as he was in charge of Richard Moseley and John Norton, who were confined in the factory for "abuseing the Company and their servants" to Malik Zindi the native governor. On this occasion Peachie was away for 15 days "on his one business." Three months later, in July 1677, during the absence of his superiors at Balasor, he attempted to ship 100 bage of his own rice on the Company's sloop *Ganges*, and had he been successful, would have delayed the ship to the Company's detriment. For these and other "Irregularities" he was "soundly checked" and "ordered to give a pass Acknowledging his faults and that he would be more Conformable to orders in the future."

In 1678 Peachie, who had transcribed the Hugli Diary and Consultations for 1677, was sent to Kaaimbazar for a month to fulfil a like duty in the place of Thomas Collins deceased. In January 1679 he was appointed Second at Patna under Job Charnock. Four years later, in 1683, he was transferred to Malda where he succeeded Samuel Herry as Chief. Malda factory was dissolved during the war with the Mughal's forces in 1685-1687, and when the Court ordered its resettlement in 1688, they intimated their intention to

1. The "hanger," for which see letter CLXXXIII.

2. See Letter CLXXXIII.

"incourage faithfull Persons as Mr Peachy" whom they deemed suitable for the Chiefship. Peachie accordingly returned to Mahla and remained in favour until 1693 when he was accused of extravagant expenditure. In January 1693 he was sent to Fort St. George to have "his charge adjusted" and was suspended from his office until his accounts were "cleared." He failed to give a satisfactory explanation of the errors in his factory books and his answer to a bill preferred against him in the Court of Admiralty was deemed insufficient. Therefore, having "misbehaved himself, acting contrary to the trust in him reposed, he was dismissed the service, but was allowed to remain as a freeman in Madras. In December 1700 the Court ordered his account to be "stated," and a sum of £224. 15. 11 found to be due to him was paid to his legal representatives in England.

Jeremy Peachie died at Fort St. George on the 16th April 1702. He was unmarried and he left no will. Administration of his effects was granted to his brother Samuel on the 15th March 1704, but as late as July 1708 Samuel Peachie was still petitioning the Court "for what due to his late brother factor in the Bay." See *Court Books*, vols. xxviii, xxxvi, xxxix, xl; *Factory Records*, Dacca, vol. I, *Miscellaneous*, IIIa, *Fort St. George*, viii, xi, xii, *Hugli*, i, iv; *Letter Book*, vol. viii, pp. 574, 577; *Yule, Hedges' Diary*, I, 93, 103, 142, II, 261; *Diaries of Streynsham Master*, ed. Temple; *P. C. C., Admons.*].

Hugli the 31 February 1674/5

Mr Richard Edwards

Esteemed Friend

In remembrance of our former acquaintance, I give you the trouble of these lines. Our Voyage¹ was unpleasant, occasioned for want of lime water. I had put a bot[tle] in the [. . .], but aboard found not [any].

I have here with Mrs Nayleor² sent back what things brought away: 4 plates and Silver Spoons, 2 Empty Bottles and a Cover for Dishes, which is all except 3 Remolla³ that are at the washermans, which you may Expe[c]t Per the Next. I forgott at my Coming away to Spake to you a bout your washerman, but hee acknowlidgin that Hee had lost my Coate and was willing to bee cut offe two Rupees, it restes in your Beasome to doe mee that favour.

Pray acquaint Mr Smith that I have ordred a laste to be made, and with all convenient Speede Shal[^l] get his Shooes made and send them which is what offers, Save Servis t[o] Mr Vincent and his Lady, Mr Littleton and his, and Mr Marshall, with Dew respectes to all our friends with you, I leave

1. From what follows, Peachie seems to have paid a visit to Kasimbazar and to have recently returned to Hugli.

2. Wife of John Naylor, the Company's silk-dyer at Kasimbazar.

3. Hind. *ramal*, kerchief.

to trouble you¹ and period with this Benediction, Live Longe, [.] and be happ[y is the . . .] wishes of

Your friend and Servan[t] to Command
JERR PEACOCK[E]

[Endorsed] Mr Richard Edwards
Merchant In Cassumbuzar Present

LETTER CLXXXVIII.

EDWARD READE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4083).

Hugly March 18th: 1674/5

Mr Richard Edwards
Esteemed friend

I have made enquiry about the parcell sent by Mr Hervy, and the peon tells mee that it was delivered at Mirdadpore² to a peon who is of kin to Colly Caune,³ and from him hope you will have received it ere this.

At my goeing to Ball[aeore] I gave you the trouble to buy mee [?some];⁴ have forgot what you disb[ursed] for mee. P[ray let me] know what it was, that I may make you satis[fa]ction: the trouble it's selfe being an obligation on

Your reall friend and Servant
EDW: READE

[Endorsed] For Mr Richard Edwards
Merchant In Cassumbuzar

LETTER CLXXXIX.

HENRY CARPENTER TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O.C. 4090).

Singee le 4th May 1675.

Mr Richard Edwards
Loveing friend

This serves only as a duplicate to my last to you, which was of the 20th past month,⁵ in which acquainting you of Mr Peacock's denying to owe you

-
1. I forbear troubling you further and close.
 2. Mirdadpur.
 3. Kala Khan. See Letters LXIII, CXX.
 4. Some words are torn away: Reade is probably referring to the bamboo asked for in Letter CLXIV.
 5. This letter does not exist.

thing, and must, it seems, be putt in mind of circumstances of the Debt ere he pay it. I tooke this opportunity also to lett you know it, fearing my last might miscarry as well as severall others formerly.

Noe more but kind Salutes, with wishes for your health, Remaine

At your Command

HENRY CARPENTER.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassumbazar

LETTER CXG.

JOHN SMITH TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4091).

Hugly May 22d. 1675.

Mr Richard Edwards

Good freind

Pardon mee that I have not writt you Since my arrivall from the Coast. I assure you want of time and oppertunity was the cause of it, beside some differences created by Mr Clavells not obeying the Agents orders.¹

I am resolved by next shippa for the Fort,² God willing, and I shall want money to adjust with some creditors, which they made a great crime my last Voyage; therefore, pray use your utmost endeavours speedily to send mee what you ow mee. I would not presse you to it were I not much necessitated as now I am. Therefore, I begg you will not faile to send mee all, or at the least 15 of [r 16]00 Rs., [? as] Mr Hervey by a letter to Mr Mohun³ prevented my Receiving that debt, which hee declared would have paid, had not that letter forbid him.

I would bee glad to here some news from you. Mr Read hath surprised mee with the suddenesse of his Cosseds going, soe desire you excuse hast.

1. In December, 1674, Smith left Balasor without permission and went to Madras in a "country ship," ostensibly to recover debts that he alleged to be due to him there; but his primary object was to lay his grievances before the authorities at Fort St. George. Sir William Langhorne and his Council found "much of private matter" in the "tende" of "long standing in the Bay," but Smith managed to make out a case for himself. He returned to Bengal with orders for his reinstatement as Chief at Dacca. These orders were disregarded by Clavell who insisted on waiting for instructions from the Court of Committees.

2. Smith's intention to make a second voyage to Fort St. George was frustrated.

3. Richard Mohun, Chief at Masulipatam.

Pray tell Mr Cole and Mr Harding¹ I have brought some money for them from the Coast, which Ile pay to there order if theile give mee up my Receipts.

I rest

Your assured freind and Servant to my utmost power

JOHN SMITH.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassambazar

LETTER CXCI.

GEORGE KNIPE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O.C. 4092).

Hughly the 25th May 1675

Mr Richard Edwards

Affectionate Friend

Yours of the 27th ultimo is long Since [come to] hand, which in like manner should have answered, if [? heard of] the Cossid's goeing. It may bee I told you that Seram [? pore] remaynes was but 12 rs.² I should also have spoke [to Mr] Vincent about Cebam Banyan³ butt I must tel[?] you] the plaine truth of it, I was troubled to the very [? heart] to see how things did goe with mee when I le[ft Ballasore] so that I did forgett it.

I thanke [you for] the Slippers you sent mee, and shall [. . .] thereof send you 6 paire shoes according to your [? request] assoone as can gett them ready, as likewise [. . .] who desired my — — — — when left Cosumbazar, [to] whome pray give my best doa Sallam,⁴ as lik[ewise] that of my — — — — Concerning my likeing of [. . .] truly pritty well, if could butt live quietly, but [? here] is nothing but heartburning and Strife, so that th[is . . .] I know (if I had money), could gett more here than [at] Cassumbazar, yet would rather to take my ease and quiet [and]ly upon a Beld of Straw then to tumble and torme[nt my] selfe on a feather bed Strow'd with Corceatah.⁵

As for newes, truly though we have it sooner [than] you, yet altogether

1. James Harding, elected writer 1st November, 1671. He was sent to Kasinagar in 1674. See *Diaries of Streygham Master*, ed. Temple, II. 190.

2. Serampur, south of Hughli, where the Danes established a factory a few months later. Knipe seems to mean that only 12 rupees-worth of goods in which he and Edwards were interested were remaining at Serampur.

3. Silram (Shiv Ram), a *lanya* or Hindu trader.

4. *Bahut du'a salam*, best compliments. See Letter CLXXVIII.

5. Probably an allusion to the *khariya* ceremony at some Hindu weddings. The sense would be 'a feather bed strewn with young women in male attire.'

as private. I suppose you [know how] it goes with Mr Hall and Mr. Smith.¹
Pray receiv[e of] Cheaternull² 8 Rs. for a peece of Chint bought of mee.

[I] should bee very glad to see you come with Mr V[incent] &ca. hither,
being all at present from

Your assaured Loveing [friend] to serve you

GEO: [KNIPE]

Pray in your next tell mee how [you] like weavers and Thro[w]sters.³

Idem G K

[Endorsed]. To Mr John Marshall Merchant Second for the honble. Compa-
nies Affaires In Cassumbazar with a [?] perwanna.⁴

LETTER CXCII.

GEORGE KNIPE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O.C. 4093).

Hugly the 30th May 1675

Esteemed Friend

Yours of the 25th Current have received. I am glad you received the
Slippers of Mr. Greenhill,⁵ butt sory to see he had no more witt butt to lett them
come to the view of all people.

I have received the 4 Strings, as also to more Jura que Chura sent to ho-
mora Jura. I thank you very kindly for both, and hummora boot dna and Sal
lam to you.⁶

I am glad your man is arrived from Sindree.⁷ The prises of goods are [as]
followeth, Vixt.

Tutanague⁸ 30ru: the [ma]und ready money, but fine

1. Pending definite orders from the Company, the Council at Fort St. George had recommended that John Smith and Joseph Hall, who had been suspended for mismanagement and insubordination, should be temporarily restored to their posts.

2. Chitar Mal.

3. Probably an allusion to Michael Lovesey (or. Lovely) and Peter Farrill, weavers, and Daniel Singer and John Griffith, throwsters, who all appear to have been sent to Kasimbazar early in 1675. Two of them had previously been soldiers. See *Diaries of Streygham Master*, ed. Temple, I. 497-498.

4. Pers. *perwanna*, an order, official letter. Knipe's letter to Edwards seems to have been enclosed with an official document to John Marshall.

5. Edward Greenhill, a "Freeman" of Masulipatam. See *Diaries of Streygham Master*, ed. Temple, II. 105.

6. This paragraph should run:—"I have received the 4 strings, as also *tumleri jora 25 churi* (your wife's bracelets) sent to *hamari jora* (my wife). I thank you very kindly for both, and *hamara bahut da's adasi* (my best compliments)."

7. Singhiya. See Letter CLIV.

8. *Tutanaga*, spelter.

Tinn 26:

Copper 36:

pepper 12:

Sandall wood 24 Rupees the maund.

Per this boat I have sent you 55 peeces of lead weighing the weight 60 maunds, 13 Sear, which desire you to putt of assoone as possible (it cost me 8 ru: the maund), that is, in tru[e]k for Sugar of the Coursest sort, to be here in Hugly [by the m]iddle of October. Good freind, I desire you frie[ndly to] dispose [. . . a]ssoone [as possi]ble [? may b]ee for I [? shall require] the Sugar here in the begining of November, as also(in case you cannot pull it off, pray take up so much money at Interest as the lead cost mee and Send it downe in Sugar, and I will readily pay it. Pray write me the price of the Sugar per next; the Sooner you gett the Sugar the better.

If your man comes downe I shall see to get what goods and what quantity you desire, but for [. . .] concerned in good truth this yeare hath almost bro[ke]n my back, therefore cannot meddle with it, being all at present from

Your reall friend and Servant

Geo: KNIPE

[Pr]y doe what you can in disposall [of m]y Cozen Smyths¹ Chank.²

Id C K.

[My] Service to Mr Vincent, Mr Marshall [. . .] &ca in [. . .].

The Charges o[f] the boat hence towards you is 6 Rs. [. . .]

[On reverse] There is in the [? boat] 4 peeces Sale cloth and 2 matts for Mr [E.

Li]ttleton.

Assoone as the Co[said retu]rnes thether, pray send [. . .].

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassambazar

LETTER CXCH.

GEORGE KNIPE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O.C. 4107).

Hugly the 29th August 1[675]

Mr Richard Edwards.

Loveing friend

Yours of the 26th Current is come to hand [wherein I] see Sheak atchee³ is false from his bergain[e, and] haveing no remedy to make him performe [? the same], I desire and order you to sell the lead for what yo[u ? can

1. Smith may be the "cozen" mentioned by Knipe in Letter CLXXXV, but the term only implied intimacy.

2. *Sankh*, conch-shell.

3. *Shakh Hajl*.

get] and Invest the money into Sugar assoone as possibly y[ou can], for time grows near[e],¹ and I should have it downe here [by the] begining of November; therefore pray be Speedy [in what] you doe. Be sure to put up the Sugar in equall propo[r]tions, that is, 2 mds. 13 s. in a bag, and that it be well put up in [? strong] Guany.²

For my wine, the Canary cost mee 6 ru., the [. . .] in Madras, and the Rhenish 5½ ru. If you ca[n get] more for it, pray sell it so, but not under.

You may remember in one of my f[ormer] letters I write to you to receive of Cheetarmull [8 rs.]³ for a peece of Chint he had of mee.

Nothing else at present, hoping to be with you by the end of next month for 2 or 3 daies, remayne

Your ready friend

GEO: KNIFE

If you or Mr Vincent desires to have any Copper or Tutanague, it is very cheap [? here, Copper] at 34 and Tutanague at 27 ru. the maund.

Idem G K

[. . .] boot don and Sallam⁴ to [. . .] Sugar is good [?] price I am [. . .] contented.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassambuzar

LETTER CXCIV.

HENRY CARPENTER TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O.C. 4108).

Hugly 1e 30th August 1676.

[Mr Richard] Edwards

[Esteeme]d Friend

Sir, These are to desire you per first to send, if can with Conveniency, the 2 pair Breeches strings, and if not already done, to give order about the Belt I desired,⁵ [? the] which I would, if possible, be possessor off ere my Leaving this place. Pray let the Peeter⁶ be at least 2 fingers broad and about 2 and half coveds long,⁷ and the peece for strapps about the same lenght and half as broad.

1. The time of the arrival of the Company's ships from Europe.

2. Hind. *ganai*, sacking.

3. The amount is given in Letter OXCI.

4. See Letter OXCII.

5. The letter containing the request for these articles does not exist.

6. By "Peeter" the writer seems to mean belting, something akin to the modern waist-webbing known as Peterham.

7. About 2 yds. long. A coved (covado) was 18·27 in.

Pray please, if to be had, with the other things to send half a peece of red elite stuff for Vallens¹ for curtains. Tis for a small Cannapy, soe that a small matter of it will be sufficient. Perhaps you may have a Remnant by you.

Sir, what account after proceury of these things shall be between us, I shall th[a]nkfully follow your orders, either in paying it here to whom you shall appoint, or in procureing any thing you shall desire in Ballasore, whether suppose am shortly going, where your commands shall always be most welcome [to] Sir

Your highly obleiged Friend and Servant

HENRY CARPENTER

If any by you, send me [...] Collobetty gold² for [. . .]

Idem H C

[On reverse]]T[be inclosed pray deliver to Mr Naler³

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant in Cassambazar

LETTER CXC.V.

EDMUND BUGDEN TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4112).

[Ballasore: 13th September 1675]

Mr Richard Edwards

Respected freind

A litle after Mr Paces death⁴ I received for him two swords,⁵ sent I suppose by you; therefore pray send mee word how accounts stand with him, being I am an Overseer⁶ and makeing up his accounts, which wilbe very difficult to finish, if those in the Bay with whome he hath dealeings dont help mee, being all his busines since October last are in loose papers.

Pray send my Wife hir song booke you borrowed at Hugly, and tell mee what is become of my Nimches.⁷ If you want any thing here I can help you to, write, and it shall be sent you by

Your assured freind to command

EDMUND BUGDEN

1. Thin material for valance (drapery).

2. Kalsbaitan, twisted gold and silk thread. See Letter CXII.

3. John Naylor, dyer.

4. See Letter LXXX.

5. One of these was probably the "hanger" mentioned in Letter CXXXXIII.

6. By "overseer" is meant a person formerly appointed by a testator to supervise or assist the executors of a will.

7. Hind, *nimcha*, a dagger.

Ballasore:

13th September: 1675

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassambazar

LETTER CXCVI.

SAMUEL BULLIVANT TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4113).

Singee: 20 September 167[5]

Mr Richard Edwards

Respected Freind

I have not of late [written] to you, not having any thing materiall [[?]but] suppose (not hearing from you) my [[?]musk] is as yet unsold.¹ I have intentions to s[^end] it to England. These are therefore t[^he] r[e]quest. . . .] whome I now write about it.

My [service] to Mr Vincent, Mr Marshall, particularly Mr Littleton and his Lady, and pray des[ire] Mr Littleton, if those few bottles of min[^e], so long since promised to send. bee in [his] hands, that hee would forward them to [me] by the primo opportunity of boates.

Not [else s]ave kind respects to your selfe and subscribe:

Your re[al] freind] to s[^erve you]

SAML: BULLIVANT;

[Endorsed] For Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassimbazar

LETTER CXCVII.

EDMUND BUGDEN TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4124).

Ballasore: 2d November 1675

Mr Richard Edwards

Respected freind.

Yours of the 22th past month received with your account of Mr Paces, for which have credited you 35 r. 10 a. and he in his account makes you Debtor 57 ru., so there will be due to him 21 ru. 6 a. His account of your being debited to him is at the bottom of the letter concerning the Rosewater remaining in your hands: do not doubt but you will do him what right may be.

1. See Letter CLXXXII.

My Wife thanks you heartily for your remembrance of hir. The booke¹ is received. Concerning the Nimchaes,² I leave the Price to you; Never any sold under $1\frac{1}{2}$ r. Per peice; some hath been for 2r. The Musk shalbe dellivered Mr Carpenter as per order.

At Present have not elce to advise, but what powder you have writt for shall Procure, and tell you that I remain

Your assured freind and servant

EDMUND BUGDEN

pray, neighb[o]ur, s[e]nd me [before the ships goe] 10 or 20 fine Pattana Switches.³

1673/4	Richard Edwards	Dr		Cr.
		r. s.		r. s.
Jan: 1st	To Ballasore account	16.	4	Per 1 bale sugar received of
"	To short charges			Mr Byam
	account arrack	10.	-	9. 4
[Septem]ber 8.	To severalls bought			
	for you at times	40.	-	
	Rs.	66.	4	

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards
Merchant In Cassambazar

LETTER CXCIII.

MATTHIAS VINCENT TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4126).

Cassambazar 5 November 1675

Mr Richard Edwards

Respected Good Friend

I hope this will meet you after all trouble past in the way up, safely arrived in Pattana, where I desire you to make your abode as short as the businesse I have desired you to Performe will suffer you. If, when you come down (it being a quick Oolauck⁴ you are upon), you could ly short of Rajamaull till about midnight, haveing well rested your men on purpose be-

1. The "song booke." See Letter CXCIV.

2. Daggers. See Letter CXCIV.

3. Of Patna bamboo. See Letter CLXIV.

4. *Utal*. See Letter CXIV.

fore hand, so that you might by² the Shaubns³ between that and three in the morning, you would be sooner here and avoid a great deal of trouble there, the Dutch Patelloes⁴ you left there being not cleared to this day. I leave it to you, well knowing you use not to come short in any things of this nature.

Pray remember me kindly to Mr Bullyvant, and tell Stephen Gwyllym⁵ he need not have not Mr Bullyvant to have enaed⁶ his Europe letters, it being against my principles (though not against Mr Halls)⁷ to stop or intercept letters. I am the willingier to let him know this, having seen a letter of his to Mr Cole, whereby he seemes to be a well enclined youth and possibly may be only mistaken in me, and not so grounded as the Gent⁸ he lived with in (and by whose manageing [o]f hi[m] he was removed from) Ballasore.⁹

I wish you much better health and remaine, as you may assure your self you shall allwaies find me, maugre whatever you have been buzzed in the ear to the Contrary

Your affectionate and very reall Friend

MATTS: VINCENT

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant Present In Pattana

[Also endorsed by Richard Edwards] from Mr Vincent, received in Pattana November 17: 16, dated November 5.

LETTER CXCIX.

GEORGE WHITE TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4146).

Ballasore December 8 [1675]

Mr Richard Edwards

Worthy and truly Respected Preind

I have b[oth your] kind letters of the 17 and 26 past, with the specified P[articulars] from Mr Bugden. For your care and kindness in [the provision thereof I give you my due thanks and am very [sorry] you were not correspondently Serv'd in those things [you] recommended to me, the blame

2. "Slip" or "pass unobserved" seems to be omitted.

3. Hind, *shikur*, patrol, watchman.

4. A large flat-bottomed boat, *patels*, used for the transport of saltpetre from Patna.

5. Stephen Gwilliams. See Letter XCIX.

6. Enclosed with his own.

7. Joseph Hall, who was violently antagonistic to Vincent.

8. The sense seems to be, "has not so much grounds for his suspicion of me as of the Gent, &c.

9. Gwilliams had only recently been sent to Patna. The "Gent" referred to was probably Hall.

whereof I hope you will not in the least impute to me, in Regard I was necessitated to imploy a second hand th[erein, my] indispensable Occasions not permitting m[e to go] in Person to Metchlepatam,¹ which, however, I sho[uld have] thought needless, such was my confide[nce in] Mr Freemans Freindship,² and truly I am [loth] yet to Entertaine any other Opinion of h[im], but for both yours and my better satisfaction sha[ll] discourse him about it when God pleases to Ariv[e] me at the Coast, whether I am now bound [in the] English ships.³

I am very much Rejoyc'd to understand [your] hopes of A speedy composition of your late [unhappy] imbroyle and wish it Perfectly accomplish'd [and buried] in Oblivion. And here I might very Oppertu[nely offer] you my freindly Advice to apply this Unhappy ac[cident] as a caveat⁴ to secure you from further adventuring on such Eminent hazards. But I suppose 'tis [now] unnecessary to use any Arguments, for sad [experience] teaches the burnt Chylde to dread the fire.

I take it as a great Evidence of your Fre[indship] that you are pleased to disclose your thoughts with so [much] freedom to me; and though I dare scarce ad[venture] to offer you my advice in a conserne of such Import, yet I may not omitt to give you my se[nse] of it and tell you that I can by noe meanes encourage you to desert your imploy in hopes to better your selfe by turning Freeman, for besides that wee who pass unde[r] th[at] App[er]tation are now soe numerous that our Services are beco[m]e cheape and contemptible, the trade is allsoe generally soe decay'd and dead that the play is scarce worth the Cand[le], nor know I now any Voyage c[on]siderably benefi[cial] except that of Persia, which I think allsoe has passd the meridian and is declining, and on shoare, under the jurisdiction of a Chiefe, I suppose you cannot w[ith] imagine [sic] any probabillity of an advantageo[us] settlement when out of the line of communication, sin[ce] I beleive you find it difficult Enough now you are within the Paile of the Church.⁵ Upon the matter, therefore, tis my Opinion that you thinke not of alltering your station where, [al]though you may not yet [have] attain'd what is both your due and desert, Yet I canno[t] doubt but your Abillities will be taken notice of to your Speedy preferment, which I heartily wish you, with all prosperous success in your proceedings.

1. Masulipatam.

2. For Robert Freeman, see Letter XVII.

3. The *Anne* and the *Loyall Subject* commanded by Captain Zachary Browne and Captain William Goodlad.

4. Warning.

5. White was trading in India without the Company's sanction. See Letter XXIV.

6. A satirical reference to the Company's service.

Mr Clavell being busily employ'd, I have Addressed my selfe to Mr John Smith for more Perfect notices of your concerne with Mr Langston,¹ and have from him Received an Invoys of all sent up for account of himselfe, you and Mr Bugden. But as to yours in Particular, it gives me noe more light than your former Advice. However, I will again endeavour all I possibly can for Recovery of what due to you and advise you of the success by the first from Metchleputam, till when I take my leave, Kindly Saluteing you and resting, Sir

Your affectionate Friend and Servant

GEO: WHITE[E]

I shall demand your 8 Rupees of Mr Freeman.

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Cassambazar

LETTER CC.

JOHN NAYLOR TO RICHARD EDWARDS.

(O. C. 4152).

[At a Court of Committees held on the 18th November, 1670, John Naylor, who was born *c.* 1646, agreed to serve the Company as a silk-dyer for four years at a salary of £50 per annum, part of which was to be paid in England and the rest in India. On reaching Madras, he was sent on to Bengal in the *Sampson*, in August, 1671, with "one he recommends," *viz.*, Richard Moseley who had come to India as a soldier. Naylor's capabilities in his trade do not appear to have been great. In August 1672 Matthias Vincent reported that he "only dyes blacks," and two years later (February 1674) the Council at Hugli found that "omissions in dying stuff" were due to Naylor's "negligence," and they informed the Court that he "does not pretend to dye colours and has been very unsuccessful in that, so has been put to other work." In reply, the Court ordered that, since he was "noe artist," he should be dismissed. In the following year (December 1676) the orders were repeated, and the Council at Hugli was directed to send the dyer who was found "unfitt for that worke he went out for" either to England or to Fort St. George.

Meanwhile, however, Naylor seems to have become more proficient in his calling. He had married and had settled down in Bengal, and when Streynsham Master paid visit of inspection to Kasimbazar in October 1676, he petitioned that, since he had served the Company two years longer than his "Contracted time"

1. See Letter CXLV.

and was now "married and hath his family here with him" he might have the whole of his salary paid to him in India. The request was thought reasonable and was granted "so long as he shall behave himself well in his employment."

In 1673, and again in 1676, Naylor was called upon to give evidence regarding charges brought against his Chief at Kasimbazar. In August 1673 he, with George Knipe and Richard Moseley, declared Matthijs Vincent innocent of causing the death of Raghu the Company's poddar or cashkeeper, who was said to have died after a flogging administered by Vincent's orders, and in October 1676, when Stroynsham Master was conducting an enquiry into the incident, Naylor repeated his evidence. In the same month, since he had been resident at Kasimbazar "all Mr Vincents time except the first three weekes, he was called upon to support or refute the charge that the Chief's house was a resort of papists. Again his evidence was in Vincent's favour. Finally, when Vincent brought a counter charge against Joseph Hall, who had been aspersing him to the Court at home Naylor deposed that Hall had admitted his wish to defraud the Company but had been frustrated in his design by Vincent.

In 1678 Naylor and his wife went to Hugli taking with them their son Thomas, who was to go to England in the *Society*, together with Edward Littleton's young daughter, for their "Education and Instruction." In 1680 Naylor petitioned the Company to be confirmed "Chief Dyer," but the Court replied (January 1681) that, though he was "the eldest" dyer, there was "no precedency in that trade and he can have no other preferment" nor be permitted to "send prohibited goods beyond what allowed." Naylor had already been carrying on private trade, and on the Court's refusal to promote him, he threw in his lot with the "interlopers." He was, in consequence, dismissed by Agent William Hedges and sent to Balasor to embark on the homeward bound ships in 1683. He managed to escape and returned to Kasimbazar as agent for the private traders. In March 1684 he was "clapt into prison" by the native governor of the town and only procured his release by a heavy fine. Shortly after, he was murdered while acting as supercargo of a sloop belonging to John Davies, one of the "interlopers."

There is no mention of Mrs Naylor after 1680, but in November 1688, Eleanor Naylor, probably her daughter, was married to John Pounsett at Fort St. George. Of John Naylor's parentage nothing has been ascertained. The only person mentioned in connection with him in England is Elizabeth Short to whom part of his salary during the first few years of his service under the Company seems to have been allocated. See *Court Books*, vols. xxvii, xxix, xxxii; *Letter Books*, vols. v and vi; *Factory Records, Hugli*, vols. iv and v, *Kasimbazar*, vol. i, *Fort St. George*, vol. xvi, *Miscellaneous*, vol. iia; *Diaries of Stroynsham Master*, ed. Temple; Anderson, *English Intercourse with Siam*, p. 268.

Cassambazar the 24th December 167

Mr Richard Edwards

Esteemed Friend

Since the receaveing of yours, could not have any opportunity of writing to you till now. All your families as [*sic*] well, bogth att home and abroad, I have, been to see yours abroad seavrrall times and alwayes in health.¹ We have expected you heare for seavrrall dayes and am sorry that you loose the winter heare, but suppose you have as much pleasure theire² as you could have heare. I have not more att present but subscribe

Your very Loveing friend and servant to comand

JOHN NAYLOR

Mrs Vincent is brought in beed of a boy³.

Dicke⁴ desires to bee remembred to you.

Pray present my humble service to Mr Bullifaunt.

Idem J: N:

[Endorsed] To Mr Richard Edwards

Merchant In Pattanay [or] elsewhere

1. This seems to refer to a native establishment kept up by Edwards.

2. In Patna. See Letter CXCVIII.

3. This was Vincent's second son. The first was born in 1671.

4. Richard Trenchfield, writer, who will be noticed later.

(To be continued.)

The House of Jagatseth.

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INTRODUCTION.

"This was once a house of trade—a centre of busy interests.
The throng of merchants was here—the quick pulse of gain."

Lamb.

The visitor to Murshidabad, says the author of the best guide-book to its antiquities, is generally content with seeing the Palace; the Jaffraganj cemetery, where the Nawabs of Bengal from the time of Mir Jafar lie buried; the Katra Masjid, containing the tomb of Murshid Kuli Khan, the founder of Murshidabad; the Great Gun which has gradually been raised from the ground by a peepul tree in the course of its growth; the Mobarik Manzil, where the East India Company once dispensed justice but which is now a garden house of the Nawab Bahadur of Murshidabad; Moti Jheel, the Lake of Pearls; and the Khoshbagh cemetery, where Alivardi Khan and Siraj-ud-daula were buried. Some visitors, however, proceed northwards along the main road of Murshidabad to Jaffraganj where they are shown the house which was once the residence of Mir Jaffar and the place within its enclosure where, tradition asserts, Siraj-ud-daula met his death. If the visitor were to proceed a short distance farther he would notice on the left a dilapidated gateway. Four roads branch from this gateway like the sticks of a fan and it seems that all the frequenters of these roads are wending their way to this common point. When they reach it, however, they all pass by.

From the gateway a path leads down to the river Bhagirathi dividing into two parts a piece of land of considerable extent. For the most part this is covered with jungle but in a clearing there is a building in a tolerable state of repair. The front of the building is covered with porcelain tiles evidently of Dutch manufacture, and, no doubt, the fruit of some forgotten bargain with the factors of the Dutch settlement at Cassimbazar. In a setting of canals and windmills we find on the tiles scenes from the Old and New Testaments. Cain is killing Abel; Moses is on the Mount with the two tables of stone; Rahab is letting the two spies down from the walls of Jericho; David is leading his sheep to pasture; the ravens bring food to Elijah; the children mock Elijah;

Jezebel has been thrown from the window and the dogs are leaping at her throat; we see the Baptism in the Jordan, the Woman at the Well of Samaria, the Prodigal Son taking his food from the trough and St. Peter denying his Master. With these scenes in our minds we look inside the building and our eyes fall on a *rath* or car, on which the idols are carried on the day of Jagannath and in the innermost shrine a priest is worshipping the god to whom the building has been dedicated; for this is a temple of Vishnu.

A Hindu temple adorned with stories from the Bible is not the only contrast presented to the mind in this place. Close by is a small reservoir in the middle of which a fountain once played. This and the mound surrounding it, we are told, once formed part of a stately hall. Further away is a ruined building whose walls are closely embraced by the myriad stems of a banyan tree. This was once the repository of untold wealth. In another place some walls are pointed out as the remains of a mint. Of other places tales are told of hoards of hidden treasure waiting to enrich the man who can find the secret place where it lies buried.

Here once lived the Jagat Seths—the Rothschilds of India. The path leading down to the river was once a fine road flanked with seven gates and lined with the dwellings of sepoys who guarded their wealthy master. This plot of ground now covered with jungle and bare of human habitation was once a busy hive of 4,000 people. The mound was once a palace—the Shahmashin or Seat of the Emperor—worthy to receive the Nawab Nazim of Bengal and Lord Clive when they came together to consult Jagat Seth. Clive was thinking of the men who once lived here when he said “The city of Muxadavad is as extensive, populous, and rich, as the city of London; with this difference that there are individuals in the first possessing infinitely greater property than any of the last city”; and Burke, when he referred to bankers in India who once vied in capital with the Bank of England had in his mind the house of Jagat Seth. “As the Ganges pours its water into the sea by a hundred mouths,” writes a Bengali poet, “so wealth flowed into the treasury of the Seths.”

The history of this house is the theme of the following pages. It has been gathered from the Bengal records of the East India Company, from the writings of Indian historians, from the few documents remaining in the possession of the head of the house—sole survivors of the destruction wrought by flood and earthquake—and from traditions handed down in the family. We shall relate how Hiranand Sahu transplanted the family from its home in Rajputana to Patna; how his son, Manik Chand, established it first at Dacca and then at Murshidabad and how under him and his successor the house became great in Bengal and powerful at Delhi. We shall see how at this period, when the semi-regal Nawabs of Bengal were at the height of their power, the ban-

kers of Murshidabad came into connection with the English merchants at Calcutta whose relations with the Government were frequently strained on account of the Nawab's attempts to extort money from them. At such times as these we shall find Jagat Seth acting as mediator between the English and the Nawab and we shall note the fact that whereas the officials of the Government, high and low, always ready (as Pookbah would have said) to be insulted with a considerable bribe, the Seths of Murshidabad never demanded money from the English as the price of the services they rendered them. Then will follow the events that led to the battle of Plassey and the rise of the British dominion in Bengal. It will appear from the narrative that the English would never have accomplished all they did without the aid of Jagat Seth and that his alliance with them was not tainted with the greed of men like Omichand nor with the chicanery and treachery of others. The troubled years 1760-1765, when Lord Clive was absent from India, will next engage our attention. The events of these years and the conduct of the Company's servants have been condemned by historians and at the time they were viewed with disapproval by the Directors of the Company. One fact, however, should not be forgotten. These men did not pretend to be the rulers of the country responsible for the welfare of its inhabitants. They were merchants, pursuing the ideals of merchants. Their first aim was to further the interests of the Company whose servants they were, and their second aim was to make their own fortunes by means of the system of private trade which was sanctioned by the Company and which at this time presented greater opportunities than ever for the acquisition of wealth. "The general idea at this time entertained by the servants of the Company," says Scrafton, "was, that the battle of Plassey did only restore us to the same situation we were in before the capture of Calcutta: the Subah was conceived to be as independent as ever, and the English returned into their commercial character, with no other alteration in their function, than a full indemnification for their losses, and a small acquisition of territory, which it was thought might defray the military expenses of their garrisons, grown too burthensome to be supported by their trade alone: if the forces were to take the field in support of the Subah, it was to be at his expense. These were the mutual conditions."¹ In considering the blessings which have flowed to Bengal from the battle of Plassey the conduct of the Company's servants during these years of transition will fade into insignificance and we shall rather direct our attention to the long line of Governors and officials who from the time of Warren Hastings to the present day had, and have, the welfare of the people ever before them, who—

Beneath the further stars

Bear the greater burden:

1. Observations on Mr. Vansittart's Narrative by Luke Scrafton (1766) p. 2.

Set to serve the lands they rule,
 (Save he serve no man may rule)
 Serve and love the lands they rule;
 Seeking praise nor guerdon.

It will be seen that up to this point our story will be intimately connected with the history of Bengal the course of which the Seths did much to shape. It cannot be said that this history is an inspiring subject of study but, at least, it compares favourably with the contemporary history of the Emperors at Delhi. The time was out of joint. We shall note one short period during which, according to Indian historians, the Government was blessed by the people it ruled and we shall see that the Jagat Seth of the time was largely responsible for this good government. In military affairs we shall allude to one gallant retreat brilliantly carried out to a successful issue. But, in general, the reader must not expect a picture of a benevolent government and contented subjects, of chivalrous soldiers and a loyal people or the story of great causes and high ideals. He may rather expect, as Clive wrote to the first British historian of Bengal, "fighting, tricks, chicanery, intrigues, politics and the Lord knows what."

The concluding portion of the book has to deal with a period of decline. When the sceptre passed from the line of Mir Jafar power and wealth departed from the house of Jagat Seth. The streams of wealth to which the Bengali poet refers ceased to flow into their treasury. But the transfer of the seat of Government from Murshidabad to Calcutta would not have been so disastrous to Jagat Seth had not other circumstances combined to render it so. An inability or disinclination of the head of the house to adapt himself to the new conditions aided by extravagance and a series of disasters, dissipated the immense hoards of former Jagat Seths. But we shall not have to record the total downfall of the house. There is still a Jagat Seth at Murshidabad. He does not possess the colossal wealth of some of his predecessors but the goddess Lakshmi has not entirely refused her favours. He does not occupy the high position among the nobility of Bengal that was held by Jagat Seth Mahtab Rai but he is still regarded as the head of the Oswal community to which all the Jagat Seths have belonged. His title has been officially recognised by the British Government and it is in common use among his countrymen and the British Government has permitted him to add the words "Jagat Seth" to his name for the purposes of official and social intercourse.

CHAPTER I.

HIRANAND SAHO AND SETH MANIK CHAND.

1.

The Marwaris of Rajputana occupy an eminent position among the mercantile community of India. For centuries past members of this race have left their homes in Marwar and spread themselves throughout India so that there are few parts of the country where some of them may not be found engaged in business as bankers, traders, or money-lenders. At the beginning of the 19th century it was estimated that nine-tenths of the bankers and commercial men of India were natives of Marwar.¹ Their success in business has become proverbial. "The three tufted ones," (Marwaris) says the Hindustani proverb, "the red-faced ones, (Europeans) and the cactus plant cannot live without increasing."² Nor has the acquisition of wealth hardened their hearts to the cry of the poor and afflicted. They have acquired an honourable distinction for their liberality in contributing towards works of public utility and in relieving the distress of those among whom they have made their homes.³

About the middle of the 17th century—or more precisely, on the 3rd day of the new moon of the month of Baisakh in the year 1709 Samvat, (1652 A.D.)⁴ when Shah Jehan was Emperor of Hindoestan, Hiranand Saho,⁵ an inhabitant of Nagar in Marwar belonging to the Gailarha family of the tribe of Oswals, urged by the hereditary spirit of enterprise characteristic of his race, left the place of his birth and settled in Patna.

Patna was, at this time, a place of considerable trade, and many merchants and bankers had their dwellings within its walls. The arrival of Hiranand Saho at Patna was almost contemporaneous with the establishment of an English factory there. When Bridgeman and his companions left Balasore in 1652 to establish a factory at Hugli up the Ganges and open up the trade of Bengal to the English Company they were directed to invest at least half their stock in the purchase of saltpetre which could be best obtained from Patna. A subordinate factory at Patna soon followed with an outstation at Singhya on

1. Tod's "Rajasthan" (Calcutta reprint, 1895) Vol. ii. p. 285.

2. Sir Herbert Risley, "The Peoples of India" (1900), p. 145.

3. "The Marwari community, always foremost when charity is the goal." Hon. P. C. Lyon in the "Statesman" of August 24, 1913. Sir Richard Temple, "Men and Events of My Time in India" (1884), p. 420.

4. Note supplied by the present head of the family. In the conversion of Samvat dates "Useful Tables forming an Appendix to the Journal of the Asiatic Society" Part the Second, Table xiv (Calcutta 1836) has been used.

5. Saho, (Hind. Sah and Sahu) which we find in the English records written "saw" or "shaw," means a merchant or banker—Hobson Johnson (1903), p. 815.

the saltpetre grounds. Before long the trade with Patna became so lucrative to the Company that their agent at Hugli was ordered to keep the saltpetre men constantly employed so as to have a stock always ready for shipment.⁶ On more than one occasion the Company's servants at this factory had recourse to the descendants of Hiranand Saho for loans to enable them to carry on their trade.

No particulars have been handed down to us of Hiranand Saho's life at Patna. It will probably be safe to assert that he followed his calling as a banker with ability and success and became in course of time a man of influence in his adopted city. He worshipped the Jain gods and followed the precepts of the sacred writings of the Jains. In the event of a birth, marriage or death in his household Brahmans from Rajputana presided at the appropriate ceremony and each ceremony was conducted according to the customs and rites handed down among the Oswals from ancient times. We cannot say whether he was recognised by the Oswals as their head but it is certain that his descendants at Murshidabad received, and still receive to this day, that distinction.

Hiranand Saho died on the 4th day of the full moon of the month of Magh in the year 1768 Samvat (1711 A.D.)⁷. He had seven sons whose names have been handed down and one daughter⁸ who married a son of Rai Uday Chand of Benares. The sons followed their father's profession and established banking houses in different parts of India. Six of them have fallen into almost total obscurity but the eldest, Manik Chand, who proceeded to Dacca, probably at the time when Prince Azimu-sh-shan, grandson of the Emperor Aurungzeb, was Viceroy of Bengal, was destined to become the first of the Seths of Murshidabad and to start that family on the career which made its name famous throughout the length and breadth of Hindostan.

2.

Dacca had irresistible attractions to a man who, like Manik Chand, wished to establish a banking business. It was then the capital of Bengal. The Nazim or Governor, the Diwan, whose authority was co-ordinate with rather than subordinate to that of the Nazim,⁹ with all their officers and retainers, resided there. But in addition to this the situation of Dacca qualified it in an eminent degree to become a great emporium of trade. The rivers of Bengal were the highways of commerce. It was calculated that the river-borne trade

6. Wilson, "Early Annals of the English in Bengal." Vol. I. pp. 25, 26, 33, 46.

7. From a note supplied by the present head of the family.

8. Ghose, "Modern History of the Indian Chiefs, etc." Part II. p. 345 gives her name as Dhan Bai.

9. Stewart, "History of Bengal," (1813), p. 332.

of Bengal kept in constant employment 30,000 boatmen¹⁰ and Dacca had direct communication with all the branches of this inland navigation. Its muslins and woven stuffs were of such fineness and beauty that they were eagerly sought after in Europe while the cotton from which they were manufactured was produced within the province.¹¹ The English Company established a factory there in 1668¹² and the French and Dutch had similar establishments.

The Nazim, Prince Azimu-sh-shan, did not disdain to compete with the merchants in their race for wealth but before doing so he framed the rules in such a manner that his condescension should not go unrewarded. As a beginner he conceded himself a generous start. Up to a certain stage the trade was to be strictly exclusive (Sauda-i-Khas). His agents were to be stationed at all the ports and buy up on his behalf the cargoes of all the ships that arrived. Then the common merchants were to join in the trade (Sauda-i-Am). They could come to him and buy all the goods they required.¹³ When the Emperor heard of the proceedings of his grandson he declared that this aristocratic method of trading was aristocratic madness¹⁴ and public oppression and struck off 500 horse from the Prince's military rank. Soon after this incident and perhaps in consequence of it, the Emperor appointed Kartalab Khan—a strong man who had done good service in other parts of the empire—to the office of Diwan of Bengal and bestowed on him the title of Murshid Kuli Khan.¹⁵ This step was to be of great moment to the fortunes of Manik Chand.

Murshid Kuli Khan became Diwan in 1701 and was responsible for the financial administration of the province. The task called forth all his powers. In the times of his predecessors in office large tracts of Crown lands had been granted as Jagirs¹⁶ to military and civil officers and over these jagirs the Diwan had no control. The revenue was insufficient to provide for the expenses of the government and the pay of the soldiers so that other provinces of the Empire had to make good the deficiency in the revenues of Bengal. Murshid Kuli Khan's resolute measures, sanctioned beforehand by the Emperor, soon effected

10. Rennell, *Memoir of a Map of Hindostan*, p. 355. "Probably some mistake must have occurred in the calculation, as there are certainly at present much nearer ten times that number." Hamilton, *Geographical, Statistical and Historical Description of Hindostan*, Vol. I. p. 36.

11. Rennell, *Memoir of a Map of Hindostan*, p. 61.

12. Wilson, *Earl's Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. I. 45.

13. Riyaz-u-Salatîn (English translation by Maulvi Abdus Salam) pp. 296, 247.

14. Punning on the word "sauda" which in Persian means both "trade" and "madness." Riyaz-u-Salatîn, Translator's Note, p. 247.

15. Stewart, *History of Bengal*, p. 352. Riyaz-u-Salatîn, Translator's Note, p. 299. His original name was Mirza Hadi. First he received the title of Kartalab Khan, then that of Murshid Kuli Khan and lastly that of Mutaman-ul-Mulk Ala-u-d-daulah Jaffar Khan Nasiri Nasir Jang. The English writers of the 18th century usually call him Jaffer Khan.

16. A hereditary assignment of land and of its rent as annuity "Hobson Johson" p. 446.

a complete change. With a few exceptions the jagirs were resumed and the jagirdars were granted land in Orissa in their stead. Retrenchments were made in the expenditure and the assessment and collection of the revenue were carried out under his vigilant supervision. In a short time Murshid Kuli Khan was able to send the Emperor a krur of rupees as the revenue of Bengal.

But Murshid Kuli Khan had roused up powerful enemies. The courtiers and favourites whose interests had suffered inflamed the mind of Prince Azim-ul-shan against him. Nor was this difficult. The Prince had felt the strong hand of the Diwan. He found that his control over the revenue was limited to what his position as Nazim entitled him.¹⁷ The rewards which Murshid Kuli Khan received from the Emperor filled him with envy and jealousy. A plot was formed to assassinate the Diwan and though this was unsuccessful Murshid Kuli Khan thought it prudent to remove from Dacca. "After much deliberation and consultation, he fixed on the excellent site of Makhsusabad, where news of all the four quarters of the Subah could be easily procurable, and which, like the pupil of the eye, was situate in the centre of the important places of the Subah."¹⁸ Murshid Kuli Khan settled at Makhsusabad probably at the end of 1703 or beginning of 1703.¹⁹

No record remains of the doings of Manik Chand during the progress of these events. His banking house was situated on the river-side not far from the long walls which enclosed the Lalbagh—the fort and palace of the Viceroy.²⁰ Perhaps even at this early period he was the Government banker and treasurer. Perhaps Murshid Kuli Khan had already found out the value of his advice and had consulted him in the financial reforms he had instituted and the removal of the Diwani to Murshidabad. But this is conjecture. What is certain is that when

17. The Diwan was obliged to comply with all written orders for money from that officer for the service of government. Stewart, *History of Bengal*, p.

18. *Riyazu-s-Salatin* (English translation) pp. 247-252. Stewart, *History of Bengal*, pp.

19. Stewart says 1702-3, other writers 1704. Stewart seems to be correct. According to the *Riyazu-s-Salatin* (p. 252) after Murshid Kuli Khan had been at Murshidabad for a year he started for the Imperial camp which was at that time in the Deccan. The English records under date March 27th, 1704, speak of the "Duan's Company" and Dacca as if they were two separate places and the word "company" seems to imply that the Diwan was travelling (Wilson, *Annals*, Vol. I. p. 247). On June 14th, 1704 the Diwan was on his return from Orissa through which he would pass on his way back from the Deccan (Wilson, *Annals*, Vol. I. p. 252). It appears then that Murshid Kuli Khan started for the Deccan some time before March 27th, 1704.

20. "A Panorama of the City of Dacca" in the Palace Library at Murshidabad gives the site of the "Dacca Branch Banking House of Jugget Seth." This was no doubt, as assumed above, the original house established by Manik Chand. It was rumoured that a large amount of treasure was buried under the house but when an excavation was made only two measures of oil were found. The "Panorama" is not dated. It was printed and lithographed in London.

Murshid Kuli Khan with all the officials of the Diwani left Dacca for Murshidabad. Manik Chand accompanied him and settled at Mohimapore on the banks of the Bhagirathi less than two miles from the palace of Murshid Kuli Khan. The present head of the family, the ninth in descent from Manik Chand, still resides at Mohimapore not far from the ruins of the home of his ancestors.

The historians who have dealt with the times of Murshid Kuli Khan seldom find it necessary to refer to the fortunes of Manik Chand at Murshidabad. The *Riyazu-s-salatin* makes a slight, perplexing and inaccurate allusion to the family. Modern writers have a tendency to ascribe to Manik Chand from the very first the eminent position which he undoubtedly occupied before his death in 1714. But there are indications that Manik Chand's growth in wealth and influence was, as might naturally be expected, a gradual process and coincided with the rise in fortune of Murshid Kuli Khan.

At the end of the first year's administration of the finances of Bengal at Murshidabad Murshid Kuli Khan went to the Deccan to give the Emperor an account of his stewardship. The Emperor loaded him with favours and sent him back to Bengal as Deputy Nazim in the Prince as well as Diwan in the provinces of Bengal and Orissa. It was at this time that Murshid Kuli Khan changed the name of the city of Maksudabad to Murshidabad. He also improved the city and by establishing the mint there deprived Dacca of its last claim to be considered the capital of Bengal and transferred the title to Murshidabad.²¹

Visitors to the ancient home of the Seths at Mohimapore are shown the ruins of the old Murshidabad mint. But the absolute control of the Seths over the mint seems to have come at a latter date and though its establishment at Murshidabad "was rendered easy by the command of specie possessed by the banker"²² Manik Chand does not appear to have had, at this period, the superintendence and management in his own hands. Tradition says that the first mint was situated in the Killa Nizamat near the place where the Imambara now stands and the ghat going down to the river is still known as the Mint Ghat.²³

The Consultations of the President and Council at Calcutta shed some light on this point. The English had mints of their own in the other two presidencies but not in Bengal. One of the chief requests in the petition presented to the Emperor Farruksiyar by the Surman embassy was for permission to have their bullion coined into rupees at the Murshidabad mint "without let or mo-

21. *Riyazu-s-Salatin*, pp. 254, 255.

22. Hunter's *Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. ix, p. 253.

23. The author is indebted for this information to Khondkar Fazi Robbee, Khan Bahadur, Diwan to the Nawab Bahadur of Murshidabad.

lestation."²⁴ But while Surman was at Delhi they tried through Samuel Feake, the chief of the factory at Cassimbazar, to come to an arrangement with Murshid Kuli Khan. When Feake and his Council visited Murshid Kuli Khan in August 1715 they were received civilly and "upon their demanding the freedom of the Mint and that they might coin siccaes He told them they should." The promise was not fulfilled. In March 1716 Murshid Kuli Khan "had started from his Bargain" and when he began to harass their trade at Cassimbazar it was found necessary to accommodate matters. Feake thought that Rs. 25,000 would "make up the business" of which Nawab Jafar Khan (as Murshid Kuli Khan was generally called at this time) was to have Rs. 15,000, his Diwan, Ekram Khan Rs. 5,000 and "the Muttsuddies²⁵ Rogonundun Droga²⁶ of the Mint, etc. Rs. 5,000."

For months the payment of these sums was evaded and then, in May 1717, came the news from Delhi that a farman had been obtained from Farrukhsiyar granting, among other things, the use of the mint at Murshidabad. The President and Council met and resolved as follows:—"It being necessary to make some Publick Rejoycing upon the Advice We have received from Mr. Surman and that all the Country may know Our Phirmauns are actually in Mr. Surman's Possession. Agreed That next Wednesday We make a Public Dinner for all the Companys Servants and a loud Noise with Our Cannon and conclude the day with Bonfires and other Demonstrations of Joy which we know will be taken notice of in the Wacka and other publick News Papers." Their joy was premature. On July 1st they sent 20 chests of treasure to be coined at Murshidabad but Feake could not get an order for the mint "because Jaffer-cun's²⁷ Chief Muttsuddy, Ruggoonundum seems to be in a dying Condition and till he recovers or is dead they cannot tell who to apply themselves to." In the end they visited the Nawab and showed him a copy of the farman. The Nawab took it, read it and then bluntly refused them the use of the mint.²⁸

It is evident then that up to 1717 Ruggoonundum was the darogha or, as we should say, Master of the Mint²⁹ and if, apart from business relations, the bankers of Murshidabad had any connection with the Mint the English at Cassimbazar were not aware of it. It was probably after the death of Ruggoonundum that the mint was transferred to the house of the Seths.

Aurangzeb died in 1707 and a contest arose between his sons for the throne:

24. Wilson's *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. II, Part 2, p. 61.

25. Accountants.

26. Darogha.

27. Jafar Khan.

28. Wilson's *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. II, Part 1, pp. 225, 228, 233, 234, 242, 246, 252, 253, 274, 275.

29. Hobson Jobson, p. 297.

Prince Azimu-sh-shan had for some years made Patna the headquarters of his government and now he left that city to go to the help of his father, Aurungzeb's eldest son, who became Emperor with the title of Bahadur Shah. The accession of an Emperor was a time of great anxiety to all provincial governors and officials for they could not feel secure until they had been confirmed in office by the new Emperor. A family tradition states, and there is nothing improbable in the statement, that Manik Chand helped Murshid Kuli Khan to purchase his confirmation in office after the death of Aurungzeb. In 1713 Farrukhsiyar made Murshid Kuli Khan Governor as well as Diwan of Bengal and Orissa and shortly afterwards Behar was added.

Murshid Kuli Khan was the most able and the most successful of all the Muhammadan rulers of Bengal. He preserved order throughout the provinces with an army of 2,000 cavalry and 4,000 infantry. So strict was he in the administration of justice that he is said to have put his own son to death for an infringement of the law. "The names of freebooters, night-marauders and assassins were blotted out from the annals of the Bengal satrapy, and the dwellers, both of towns and villages, lived in perfect peace and comfort." He remitted to the Emperor at Delhi an annual tribute of from one krur thirty lacs to one krur fifty lacs but his inhuman treatment of zamindars and others who failed in their payments, is said to have made him detested throughout the province. He was certainly detested by the English whom he hurt where merchants are most sensitive—their pockets.³⁰

The payments of the zamindars and other collectors of the revenue were made into the banking house of Manik Chand and it was through him that the annual tribute was remitted to Delhi. During the government of Murshid Kuli Khan the treasure was conveyed to Delhi in waggons in charge of an armed escort. Obviously when times were troublous, there was a great risk that the convoy would not reach its destination. Azimu-sh-shan seized the tribute in 1707 when the war between the sons of Aurungzeb broke out. Again, in 1712, when there was a similar fight for the succession, it was captured by Farrukhsiyar³¹ and in 1720 it was delayed for a long time at Patna owing to a revolt at Allahabad.³² All these dangers were avoided when Manik Chand (according to the family tradition) but more probably his successor, remitted the tribute by means of drafts drawn by him on the family firm at Delhi.

30. *Biyann-e-Salatin*, pp. 257, 259, 262, 273. Stewart, *History of Bengal*, pp. 370, 372. Holwell, "Interesting Historical Events" (1766), p. 52.

31. *Seir-ul-Mutaqherin* (1789), Vol. I, pp. 6, 50.

32. William Irvine, *The Later Mughals*, in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1908, pp. 512, 519.

3.

It would have been strange if the wealthiest Indian banker and merchant of his time had had no dealings with the great Company of English merchants in Bengal and so one is not surprised to find in the Consultations of the Council at Calcutta references to Manik Chand and to his sister's son, Fateh Chand, whom, having no children of his own, Manik Chand adopted, and made his heir. The first connection of Manik Chand with the English of which there is any record occurred in 1706 and has reference to the Company's trade in Bengal.

By letters patent of former viceroys and farmans of Aurungzeb the English claimed the right of trading in Bengal, free of customs, subject to an annual payment of Rs. 3,000. In actual practice during the early years of the 18th century they were the victims of endless exactions from all the officers of the government high and low. If they did not pay their trade was stopped. A favourite method of extortion was to stop the saltpetre boats on their way down the river from Patna. This was a serious matter, for the Directors were demanding large quantities of saltpetre in all their letters from England. So the usual order given by the Council was "Clear the boats at any price." On one occasion they had to pay Rs. 14,000 to Prince Farrukhsiyar who had stopped the boats at Rajmahal. In 1704 the Governor of Hugli and his subordinate officers down to the munshi,³³ fifteen in number, were given presents of European goods, and then three of them threatened to obstruct the trade unless their presents were augmented by Rs. 1,100 in cash. Murshid Kuli Khan's terms were Rs. 30,000 for a sanad³⁴ granting the Company freedom to trade without hindrance. The Company were willing to give Rs. 20,000 but Murshid Kuli Khan would not lower his terms. "We have received advice from Mannick Chund"³⁵ runs the Consultation dated July 18th, 1706, "that the King's Diwan has ordered his naib³⁶ at Patna to permit our business to pass as formerly also that he will give his sanad for our free trade in Bengal upon paying him pishcash³⁷ of Rs. 30,000." At length, in January 1707 William Bugden was sent to re-establish the factory at Casimbazar and took the money for the sanad with him which he was authorised to pay as soon as the document was in his hands. Before this happened the death of Aurungzeb threw everything into confusion and Bugden was ordered back to Calcutta with the money.³⁸

³³ Writer or Secretary.

³⁴ A diploma, patent, or deed of grant by the government of an office, privilege or right. Hobson Jobson, p. 271.

³⁵ Manik Chand.

³⁶ Deputy.

³⁷ Pishcash. In the old English records this word is most generally used in the sense of a present to a great man. Hobson Jobson, p. 701.

³⁸ Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. 1. pp. 222, 254, 258, 259, 263, 266, 268, 274, 277-280, 307.

In spite of the payment of large sums of money in 1708 Murshid Kuli Khan renewed his demands in 1711. Robert Hedges, Chief of the factory at Cassimbazar, informed the Council that the Diwan "will come to no terms under Rs. 45,000 for the Prince and Rs. 15,000 for the King under which sums he will by no means grant us his Sunnad." In addition "some thousand of Rupees as contingent charges to several officers" would be necessary. These demands made the Council desperate. On July 30th they ordered Hedges to inform Murshid Kuli Khan that if he would not grant them a sanad for Rs. 30,000 and in addition help them to obtain a farman from the Emperor they would abandon the factory at Cassimbazar, stop all Mughal ships from passing Fort William and acquaint the Emperor how their trade was being impeded. On the 6th August they reiterated their orders to Hedges declaring "that if the Duan will not comply we are resolved to turn our faces to fortune." A week later Fatch Chand, Manik Chand's nephew appeared on the scene. The Council direct Hedges not to trouble about buying goods at Cassimbazar as, seeing no other way out of their troubles, they have made an arrangement with "Futtichundsaw³⁹ an Eminent Merchant being now with us and offering to provide our whole Investment now ordered at Cassimbazar for an allowance of 6½ per cent. he standing to all bad debts at the Aurungs⁴⁰ and our goods to be delivered here in Calcutta. It being so late in the Year we judge this to be the best and only method that appears to secure these goods for our homeward bound Shipping." On August 21st the Council received a letter from Hedges approving of what they had done and adding "that he could not have bought goods himself at Cassimbazar, for, if any merchant had supplied the English, he certainly would have been punished by the Duan, who still continues obstinate about the Sunnad." So on the 23rd August the agreement with Fatch Chand Saha for the goods from Cassimbazar was drawn up and signed. In October, when Hedges had loaded all his boats and was about to abandon the factory at Cassimbazar, Murshid Kuli Khan became more reasonable. He offered to give a sanad passing all the Company's business free in the provinces of Bengal, Behar and Orissa and to procure a farman from the Emperor for Rs. 30,000 cash down on receipt of the sanad and a note for Rs. 22,500 to be paid on receipt of the farman. The Council met and agreed "that since the Duan's interest is very great at Court We immediately write to Mr. Hedges, etc. at Cassimbazar to comply with him on the foregoing Terms all the Honble. Compos. effects having to pass through his

39. Fatchchand Saha.

40. A place where goods are manufactured, a depot for such goods. Hobart Johnson, p. 40.

Jurisdiction who undoubtedly will impede Them very much if we don't agree with him."⁴¹

In 1712 we catch a glimpse of Manik Chand and Fateh Chand in full darbar at Murshidabad. The times were critical. The Emperor Bahadur Shah was dead and his four sons were fighting for the throne. Murshid Kuli Khan had recognised Azimu-sh-shan as Emperor. He had coined money in his name and caused the prayer for his prosperity to be read in the mosque when he attended public worship. Then a report, which was perfectly true, came to Murshidabad that Azimu-sh-shan had been defeated and slain in battle. Murshid Kuli Khan saw clearly that it was essential to keep the provinces quiet until he had made his position secure. He decided not only to suppress but also to contradict the rumour. No one in Murshidabad was in a better position to obtain reliable news than Manik Chand and Fateh Chand. There can be no doubt that they had informed Murshid Kuli Khan of the true state of affairs but he resolved to announce that they had brought him the news of Azimu-sh-shan's success and to bestow marks of honour upon them for the welcome tidings. "The Duan," wrote Mr. Hedges from Cassimbazar, "to make the report of Mahmud Azeems⁴² being King to be credited, has Presented Monickchund with an Elephant and Seerpaw⁴³ and Phuttechund with a horse and Seerpaw. And Declares if any Person Shall Presume to Say he did not believe Mahmud Azeem was King, he Should Suffer death and have his House Plundered, which Declaration is Yet a Terror to the Merchants that they dare not disclose the Contents of their Private Letters." In the evening Hedges paid Murshid Kuli Khan a visit. They talked for two hours "mostly of war and battles And on his going away . . . he bid him rest Satisfied that all things will be well. Take Care of Your Factory and go in Peace." But he would not accept Hedges' congratulatory present, nor would he say that he had heard any news at all "for Monickchunds mouth must spread all the Lyes he would have reported."⁴⁴

To appreciate the danger and difficulty of Murshid Kuli Khan's position at this crisis we have only to read the steps taken by the English at Calcutta at the same time. When the news of the Emperor's death was received the Council passed the following resolution:—"Considering the great Confusions and Troubles that may arise in Bengal during the Inter Regnum, Agreed that we Order all our Officers of this Garrison to be constantly in a Readiness, and

41. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. I, pp. 226, 238, 239, Vol. II, Part 1, pp. 19-21, 23, 24.

42. Muhammad Azimu-sh-Shan.

43. *Sar-a-pa*, a complete suit, presented as a Khilat or dress of honour, by the sovereign or his representative. Holmon Johnson, p. 808.

44. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. II, Part 1, pp. 45, 47, 48.

to See that all under them be ready, And that Ammunition be put into the proper places, that are for that purpose on all Bastions, And that we keep an Extraordinary lookout, And that the Gunner mount the Mortars, And some great Guns be placed on the Curtains, Also that the Buxie⁴⁵ lay in good Store of all sorts of grain, and Provisions; As for the soldiers we have now about 200 besides Officers, amongst which are about 140 stout Europeans, which with the Company's Servants and Freemen of this Place And the Gunroom Crew, We think will on any Occasion be sufficient to Defend this Garrison."⁴⁶

The Consultations also prove that the Company's servants, or at least one of them, had private transactions with Manik Chand. A Mr. Josiah Chitty, the Company's paymaster and storekeeper in 1710, was found guilty of misappropriating the Company's cash and dismissed the service. But this was not all. Chitty had contracted large debts with Indian merchants and although by February 1712, he had made good the money belonging to the Company he could not leave for England until he had satisfied his creditors. In February 1713 he made over to the Council a bond for 13,804 pagodas due to him from a merchant at Madras, for the payment of his creditors. In May he sold his jewels which realised Rs. 22,611 while his debts at that time amounted to Rs. 68,130. The Consultations relate how Chitty was, at length, allowed to leave for England "Bernarsesat informing us that Monickohundsaw and the other Creditors of Mr. Josiah Chitty are willing to let him go for England upon his paying Rs. 7,000 to Monickehund and he the said Bernarsesat⁴⁷ engaging himself to endemnify the Company from the clamour of Monickehund and Mr. Chittys other Creditors in case they or any of them complain to the Government and pretend that the debts he owes them is due from the Company We do agree that an order be given to Captain Winter to receive Mr Chitty a Passenger on his ship the "King William" to England." It is evident that Manik Chand was a person of importance and one whose complaints would be attended to by the

45. "In the early days of the Council of Fort William we find the title Buxee applied to a European Civil Officer, through whom payments were made."—Hobson Johnson, p. 134.

46. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. II, Part 1, p. 44.

47. Varanasi Sett (Wilson). These Setts of Calcutta have been confused with the Seths of Murchidabad by the Rev. J. Long in his "Selections from Unpublished Records of Government"—p. 9 (note) and elsewhere. Four families of Byasacks and one of Setts left Saigaoon in the middle of the 16th century, founded the settlement of Govindpur on the site of the present Fort William and established the Sataanni market on the north of Calcutta where they did business with the Portuguese. Many years after they came into connection with the English. Varanasi Sett was the Company's broker, the most important of their Indian servants (Wilson's *Early Annals*, etc., Vol. I. pp. 128, 137, 199, 200).

Government. As soon as he is satisfied Chitty may go. The claims of the other merchants had not been fully satisfied as late as 1716.⁴⁸

4.

As Manik Chand became the most famous of the sons of Hiranand Saho he is usually placed first when they are enumerated but it is not certain that he was the eldest of them. The remaining six sons were Golabchand, Nanakchand, Ameechand, Sadanand, Gobordhandas, and Dipchand.⁴⁹ They do not appear in the pages of historians. The only memory of them handed down in the family is that they founded banking houses in various parts of northern India and the transactions of these banks, have, for the most part, perished with the books in which they were recorded. But the records of one great company of merchants—the East India Company—are still carefully preserved and from that source it is established that Sadanand settled at Delhi and there had transactions with Kwajah Sarkad, the Armenian, who accompanied John Surman on the famous embassy despatched by the Company to the Emperor Farrukhsiyar in 1714. These transactions were, years afterwards, to cause trouble between the Company and Sadanand's son, Lalji, as will be recorded in its due place.⁵⁰

The Surman embassy travelled through some of the principal cities of northern India and made a long stay at Delhi and we have a record of their money transactions in all these places. If, as was no doubt the case, the sons of Hiranand Saho had banking establishments of note in these cities it would probably have happened that the Embassy came into contact with them. A study of the Diary, Consultations and Letters of the members of the embassy reveals the following facts.

To furnish the embassy with money the President and Council at Calcutta gave Surman letters of credit addressed apparently to two bankers at Delhi named Lalvihari and Jugalprasad. These letters of credit, however, proved useless. "We have met with nothing but denials," they write on July 20th 1715, "Lollbehary refusing to let us have any money but on very unreasonable conditions, the other Joogurpursand remains in Agra. . . . we have wrote to him but with little hopes of Success We hope your Honour etc. a's first letters will remedy this disappointment."⁵¹ Fresh letters of credit were accordingly sent and the embassy appears to have obtained money from the factors of Gololchund Saw giving bills of exchange drawn on the President and Council at Calcutta for on October 6th they informed the Council that Gololchund

48. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. II, Part 1, pp. 16, 40, 105, 132, 160, 241.

49. Note supplied by the present head of the family.

50. Page 149.

51. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. II, Part 2, pp. 53, 54.

Saw's agent was complaining that the Council had accepted the bills but not paid them.⁵² They had no further occasion to borrow money till April 9th 1717. On that date they gave a bill of exchange drawn on the President and Council for Rs. 25,000 "payable 70 days after date to Sawbiparry or Order being for value received here from Murlidar Bawsein Decanny Ray Factors to Kissoray Kissenchund."⁵³ The embassy, then, first borrowed from the factors of Gololchundsaw and next of Kissoray Kissenchund.

On July 5th they draw two bills on the Company—one for Rs. 12,000 and the other for Rs. 13,000—for value received at Delhi from the factors of Kissoray Kissenchund and write two letters⁵⁴ to the Council informing them of the transactions. But in their next letter,⁵⁵ dated July 19th, written from Bara-pulah after their departure from Delhi, they state "We wrote your Honour etc., the 7th June we also wrote your Honour etc., two letters of the 5th instant, to accompany two bills of Exchange, one for 13,000 and one for 12,000 Siccas then drawn, payable to Sawbiparry for the value received here from Gololchundsaw's factors." It follows, therefore, that either a mistake has been made in this letter or the ambassadors could say that they had borrowed of the factors of Gololchundsaw or the factors of Kissoray Kissenchund indifferently, that these were in fact the same persons and represented the same firm. The bills certainly came into the hands of Gololchund who sold them to the house of Manik Chand. Gololchund himself came to see the ambassadors at Patna and complained that the bills had been subjected to a discount of two per cent and requested them to obtain a statement from Manik Chand's factory at Calcutta "importing that they have received the Bill in full as it was drawn."⁵⁶

Again, the ambassadors informed the Council that they had appointed a certain Mittersein to be the English agent at Delhi and had left six months' pay for him in the hands of Gololchundsaw's factors to whom all letters for Mittersein were to be addressed⁵⁷ while in their Consultation on the matter they agreed "that Mr. John Surman pay 600 rupees to Murlidar Bawsein Decannyrays Factory with orders to pay Mittersein 100 rupees per month."⁵⁸ That is they resolved to pay the money to Kissoray Kissenchund's factors and then infor-

52. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 184.

54. *Ibid.*, Letters xxix and xxxi, p. 209.

55. *Ibid.*, Letter xxxvii, p. 213.

56. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. II, Part 2, p. 234. The words of the letter are "He (Gololchundsaw) desires Your Honour, etc. to take a writing from his Factory there to Gololchundsaw's here importing, etc." "His" apparently refers to Manik Chand and "they" to the people at Manik Chand's factory.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 213.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 218.

med the Council they were paying it into the hands of the factors of Gololchund⁵⁹aw.

At Agra the ambassadors obtain money from Kissoray Kissenchund himself,⁶⁰ at Korah Jehanabad from his factors while their letter to the Council from the same place is delivered to Gololchund's factors to be forwarded⁶¹ and a lame camel is left with the same factors to be sold.⁶² At Allahabad they again obtain money from Kissoray Kissenchund's factors.⁶³ At Benares they had no money transactions.⁶⁵

From the foregoing facts there emerges into tangible form the existence of a great banking firm with its headquarters at Patna under Gololchund, its principal branch at Agra under Kissoray Kissenchund and other branches at Korah Jehanabad and Allahabad and no doubt at other places which the ambassadors did not visit.

When we seek to connect this banking house with the house at Murshidabad a difficulty presents itself. Gololchund, or Gulalchand as the name would be transliterated now, was not one of the sons of Hiranand Saho. It may be, however, that a mistake has been made and that we ought to read Gulabchand who was a brother of Manik Chand. Gulal is a very rare, if not an entirely unknown name for an Indian while Gulab is a fairly common name. It occurs again as the name of one of Manik Chand's descendants. In fact most Indians would naturally be inclined to read Gulab instead of Gulal unless they looked at the name carefully. Curiously enough, in the facsimiles of the manuscript given in Dr. Wilson's book ⁶⁴ the b's might easily be mistaken for l's and it might be supposed that a mistake had been made in transcribing the name. A reference, however, to the manuscript at the India Office in London proves that this is not the case. But no doubt the original documents in the handwriting of Hugh Barker, the Secretary to the embassy, were kept at Calcutta and copies sent to London. A copyist whose b's and l's are almost alike might easily have made the mistake of writing Golol for Golob. The English at this time were very careless and eccentric in spelling Indian names.

Then it has been seen that the first Delhi bankers to whom the members of the embassy were given letters of credit refused to have dealings with them. In such a difficulty the President and Council would naturally have turned to the

59. *Ibid.*, p. 224.

60. *Ibid.*, p. 227.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 238.

62. *Ibid.*, p. 251.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 232.

64. *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. II, Part 2. The facsimiles of the manuscript face pages 42 and 84.

head of the house at Murshidabad who was known to have great influence at Delhi and the latter would just as naturally have recommended his brother's firm to them in which he had, no doubt, a financial interest.

Again one of the transactions of the embassy with "Gololchandsaw" is linked up with Manik Chand's factory at Calcutta and though Manik Chand himself was dead at this time there is evidence to prove that for some years after his death the Murshidabad house was still known as Manik Chand's house.⁶⁵

Mittersein, the name of the man who was appointed to watch over the interests of the Company in all the three presidencies at Delhi and who was to be paid through the agency of "Gololchand's" factors, is transliterated by Dr. Wilson as Mittra Sen. Now Rai Mittra Sen was an elder brother of Fateh Chand, the adopted son of Manik Chand, and was killed in the massacre of the people at Delhi which was carried out by the order of Nadir Shah in 1739.⁶⁶

Lastly it must be borne in mind that no new discovery has been made in the essential fact. That Manik Chand and his brothers established banking houses throughout northern India is one of the traditions preserved in the family to this day. What is new is the attempt to prove that these banking houses were actually endowed with "a local habitation and a name" and what is presented for the first time is a glimpse of them actually engaged in the transaction of their business.

5.

The Consultations of the Council at Calcutta contain no reference to Manik Chand after the settlement of Mr. Chitty's debts. Manik Chand was near his end but before his death he received a mark of honour from the Emperor Farrukhsiyar.

The Emperor Farrukhsiyar had resided at Murshidabad during the lifetime of his grandfather, Bahadur Shah. He had lived on terms of friendship with Murshid Kuli Khan⁶⁷ and must have become acquainted with the Nawab's chief adviser and his adopted son, Fateh Chand. There may have been financial relations between the future Emperor and Manik Chand at this time but, if so, no record remains of them. Events, however, soon occurred which placed Farrukhsiyar under heavy pecuniary obligations to the bankers of Murshidabad.

At the death of Bahadur Shah Murshid Kuli Khan recognised Azimu-sh-shan, Farrukhsiyar's father, as Emperor but when that prince was slain in battle he made his peace with his competitor for empire, Jahandar Shah, refused

65. There is an instance of this as late as the year 1765. See page

66. Ghose, "Modern History of the Indian Chief, Rajas, etc." Part II, p. 457.

67. Stewart, "History of Bengal," p. 394.

to take up the cause of Farrukhsiyar and hinted that it would be advisable for him to leave Murshidabad. Farrukhsiyar with his household and a few attendants proceeded to Patna and threw himself on the protection of Syed Husain Ali Khan whom his father had made Governor of Behar. After a struggle between self-interest and gratitude Husain Ali Khan promised Farrukhsiyar his aid and also enlisted in the prince's service his brother Syed Abdullah Khan, the Governor of Allahabad.⁶⁸ These two Syed brothers play a great part in the history of the next eight years.

Gratitude was a somewhat rare virtue in those days in India and if Farrukhsiyar had trusted only to the support of those who had received benefits from his father he would never have become Emperor. But an Imperial Prince who was a good paymaster could always be sure that hosts of soldiers of fortune would flock to his standard. As a rule they fought bravely but if their paymaster happened to be killed in the fight their obligations were at an end and they fled from the field.⁶⁹ Farrukhsiyar's first necessity, then, was money. Accordingly Husain Ali Khan "assembled the bankers and principal men of the city: and having borrowed from them large sums of money, proportionable to their circumstances, for which he gave bonds signed by the Prince, and payable on his having subdued his enemies, he soon assembled a good army."⁷⁰ Later, in spite of the remonstrances of Husain Ali Khan, Farrukhsiyar levied forced contributions on the merchants and drove all the rich men out of the city.⁷¹

Manik Chand had a branch house at Patna which seems to have been in charge of Fateh Chand. Besides being the home of his parents his own family lived at Patna and his eldest son was born there. Even when he became the head of the house at Murshidabad after the death of Manik Chand we find him at Patna in March 1715.⁷² It is a probability almost amounting to a certainty that Fateh Chand, as Manik Chand's agent, was one of the contributors to the loan and one of the rich men that left the city. For when Farrukhsiyar on his march to Delhi came to Benares he raised "a loan of one krur of rupees on the security of the Empire from Nagar Set and other leading bankers of Benares."⁷³ Another passage from the historian just quoted throws light on the identity of this mysterious Nagar Set. He tells us that "on Jafar Khan's representation to the Emperor, Nagar Set's uncle and agent, Fateh Chand Sahu, whose services had won the good graces of the Khan,

68. *Ibid.*, pp. 394-337.

69. There are twelve instances of this from the first volume of the *Seir Mutaquerin* alone, pp. 34, 52, 53, 60, 102, 166, 214, 293, 406, 501, 508, 144.

70. *Seir Mutaquerin*, Vol. I, p. 50.

71. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. II, Part I, pp. 89, 95.

72. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Part 2, p. 24.

73. *Riyaz-e-salat*, p. 269.

was invested with the title of Jagat Set, and appointed to the office of Treasurer General of Bengal.⁷⁴ Now it is incredible that Fateh Chand was the agent of the son of one of his own brothers or sisters while he was undoubtedly the agent of Manik Chand. Again, Nagar was the name of Hiranand Saho's birth-place in Rajputana. Perhaps Manik Chand, too, had been born there. After the death of Hiranand Saho, Manik Chand was the most likely member of the family to receive such a name. Indeed Stewart, who used the book of the historian quoted above in compiling his history of Bengal very naturally corrects his authority on this point. "At his (Murshid Kuli Khan's) recommendation," says Stewart, "(Farrukhsiyar) appointed the nephew of Manickchand to be the Imperial treasurer, or banker, with the title of Juggeet Seat."⁷⁵

Stewart, while correcting one error, has retained another. It was not the Emperor Farrukhsiyar who invested Fateh Chand with the title of Jagat Seth. Another Emperor was to do this as will be told in its place. It was Manik Chand who was rewarded by the Emperor Farrukhsiyar for the financial aid which had contributed so materially to the success of his cause. A farman, issued in the third year of his reign and still in the possession of the head of the family at Murshidabad, declared that Manik Chand had been elevated with the award of the title of Seth and that it was proper and to be deemed imperative "that the civil and ministerial officers and the secretaries of the present and future should designate him as Seth."⁷⁶

According to "Hobson-Jobson" (p. 811) the word "seth" is derived from the Sanscrit "srestha" meaning "best" or "chief," "sresthi," "the chief of a corporation, a merchant or banker." In the Company's records we frequently find the word attached to the names of their Indian merchants, e.g., Bernasseseat and in course of time it was applied to these merchants as a body. On many occasions in later years, we read that the Seats or Seets were summoned to the Council Chamber to discuss with the President and Council the price of goods. But the word had never hitherto been used by the English when referring to the house at Murshidabad. In their case another word—saho (shaw, saw)—meaning "merchant" or "banker" had been used, e.g. Monickchundsaw Futtichundsaw, and when the records begin to apply the word to the bankers of Murshidabad it is not, as a rule, added to the name as it was in the case of their own merchants. We seldom find in the records "Futtichundseat" but "Seat Futtichund." In this case the word was not a mere appellation but a title, conferred by the Emperor and carrying with it a certain rank. What that rank was cannot be ascertained with precision but it was certainly such

74. *Ibid.*, pp. 273, 274.

75. *History of Bengal*, p. 393.

76. From a translation of the Emperor's farman.

as befitted the Nawab's chief adviser. One privilege which was said to have been conferred by the Emperor on Manik Chand's family at this time, a privilege which they shared with the family of the Nawab alone, was the right of wearing gold ornaments on the feet. The Emperor is said to have presented Manik Chand's wife with a golden ornament which was, and still is, held in the greatest veneration by the female members of the family.⁷⁷

Manik Chand lived only a short time after receiving his title from the Emperor. He died on the 10th day of the new moon of the month of Magh in the Samvat year 1771 (1714 A.D.)⁷⁸ His remains were placed in Manikbagh, a garden on the opposite side of the river Bhagirathi which has long since been washed away by the river. He had no children but, as has been related before, adopted Fateh Chand, the son of his sister and Rai Uday Chand, and Fateh Chand succeeded him as the head of the house at Murshidabad.

Manik Chand had raised this house to wealth and greatness. He had branches at Calcutta, Dacca, Patna and Benares. A few years after his death mention is made of a branch at Hugli which may well have been established by Manik Chand and there were probably houses in other places of which no record remains. In the case of Delhi there is a doubt. It has been asserted that Fateh Chand was the head of the firm at Delhi at the time of his adoption by Manik Chand and that Manik Chand remitted the tribute of Bengal to Delhi by drafts on his house there. But with regard to the former statement it is improbable that a boy held such a post and even if he had, the house would probably have belonged to one of Manik Chand's brothers. After his adoption we have seen that Fateh Chand was connected with Patna. Again all the evidence shows that in the time of Manik Chand the tribute of Bengal was remitted to Delhi in specie under an armed guard. As late as 1726 we read that "the King's Treasure is ready and only waits for a guard which is expected in a few days."⁷⁹ It is not till 1728, when Shuja-ud-daula was Nawab, that we find it recorded that a part of the tribute was remitted to Delhi by means of Bills of Exchange.⁸⁰ It would appear, therefore, that the house at Delhi was founded by Fateh Chand. There is no reason to doubt, however, that Manik Chand had acquired influence at the Court of Delhi and he had certainly received marks of the Emperor's favour.

In Bengal the influence of Manik Chand was almost as great as that of the Governor. He was the right-hand man of the Nawab in all his financial

77. Note supplied by the present head of the family.

78. *Ibid.*

79. India Office Records, Consultation, Monday, 6th June, 1726.

80. *Ibid.*, Consultation, Monday, 17th June, 1728.

reforms and in his private affairs. The establishment of the mint at Murshidabad was due to him and, wherever it was situated and whoever was in nominal control, there is not doubt that Manik Chand's influence over it was paramount. A few years after his death the chief of the English factory at Cassimbazar declared that Manik Chan's adopted son had the sole use of the mint and not another banker or merchant dared to buy or coin a rupees' worth of silver.⁸¹ He was the Treasurer of the Government and the private hoards of the Nawab were deposited with him. It was said that on the Nawa's death five krors of rupees remained unpaid by the Murshidabad house but this was a figment of later times. The zamindars and other collectors of the revenue made their payments to Manik Chand. "There were in those days no treasuries scattered over the country in the several districts. The zamindars collected the revenue and remitted it to the viceregal treasury at Murshidabad. Every year at the time of *Punya*, or annual settlement of the revenue, a custom introduced by Murshid Kuli Khan, all the zamindars assembled at the bank of the Seths, in order to settle their accounts, adjust the difference of *batta* or discount, and negotiate for a fresh supply of funds."⁸² In the time of Siraj-ud-daula the *Punya* appears to have been held in the month of April and to have lasted a month. That it was a great event of the year is clear from the fact that Siraj-ud-dula pleaded it as an excuse for neglecting to attend to matters in which the English were interested.⁸³ From the time of Manik Chand it may be said that "the banker and his descendants were recognised as permanent members of the Nawab's council, their influence was of chief importance in deciding the result of every dynastic revolution, and they were always in constant communication with the ministers of the Delhi court."⁸⁴

Manik Chand's wife—or rather, his principal wife for he appears to have had two—survived her husband for twenty seven years. She was a remarkable woman and when she died the priest of the family wrote a poem in her praise in which he relates her parentage, her marriage to Manik Chand, how, when Manik Chand died, she went on a pilgrimage to the holy hill of Parasnath and how she passed the remainder of her life in fasting, prayer and the practice of every kind of austerity. Noticeable too, is the interest she took in the welfare of the *Oswals* whom Manik Chand encouraged to settle in Murshidabad. At one time it is said there were as many as 500 *Oswals* in Murshidabad whose

81. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, pp. 369 of proof sheets of the portion of Vol. III (Jan., 1718—May, 1732) that was in type at the time of Dr. Wilson's death. This volume was not issued. (This volume has been published now. S. C. S.)

82. Hunter's, *Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. ix, p. 256.

83. Hill, *Bengal in 1756-57*, Vol. II, pp. 294, 355.

84. Hunter, *Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. ix, p. 254.

dwellings were clustered together near the house of the Seths and this colony received from the inhabitants of Murshidabad the name of Mahajantoli. When the fortunes of the Seths decayed the members of this settlement gradually drifted away but the presence of rich Oswals at Azimganj and Baluchar in the neighbourhood of Murshidabad is due to the encouragement and patronage which the Seths extended to their fellow clansmen.

The Poem in praise of the wife of Manik Chand is written in Gujarati and has been translated thus:—

1. With salutations to the Lord Gantama and the goddess Saraswati I begin these verses, singing the praises of great ones.

2. O gentle hearer! Harken to the praise of the Sati for it will cleanse thy mind and purify thy hearing.

3. The Jina bade us give heed to four virtues which, if a man pursue, he shall be able to steer safely across the ocean of the world.

4. In the Satya Juga there were sixteen Satis but of those of the Kall Juga Manik Deviji is chief.

5. Many volumes would be necessary to tell of her countless austerities and her strict observance of every ceremony. Let it suffice me to record those virtues which have made her famous.

6. Right glad am I to tell her virtues; in the relation of them my tongue becomes purified and it will enable men to steer clear of the shoals in this sea of life.

7. First will I relate her birth and her lineage and the town and province in which she was born.

8. In the Jambudwipa lies the country of Bharatabarsa and in the centre of this stands Mount Meru eight miles in height.

9. There is a province of Bharatabarsa named Batss and therein is situated the city of Kausambhi and below this city flows Ganga.

10. Chundanbals, most renowned of the Satis of the Satya Juga, was born in that city and Mrigabati, Satis also.

11. Anathmuni, the sixth Tirthankara Padma Praba, and many a holy man beside were also born there.

12. Near Kausambi is the town of Shahzadpur, below which flows Ganga, containing inhabitants of eighteen different nationalities.

13. The town in beauty is like to Indra's heaven and the 84 clans of the Oswals dwell therein.

14. Here lived Sravak Puran Mull of the Pargara clan, a man most virtuous and hospitable.

15. And his wife Gulabbahu, a devout follower of the Jaina religion and a woman of charitable heart.

16. Of these was Manik Debi born and her soul came from heaven.

17. She was born on the eleventh day of the full moon in the month of Sravan, Samvat 1737.

18. Kisor Kumari was the name they gave her and as she grew she became her parents' greatest joy.

19. For every lucky sign was visible in her and she possessed all good attributes.

20. In course of time her parents decided that a bridegroom must be sought and great wealth should be spent on the ceremonies of her marriage.

21. So her father gave his youngest brother charge to find a fair bridegroom for his daughter and he, after much travel, came at last to the town of Patna.

22. In the town of Patna lived a chief of the Oswals, of the clan Gailarha, a wealthy man and a generous.

23. Hiranand was his name; he was like a king who is obeyed by all, and he had seven goodly sons.

24. One of these, whose name was Manik Chand, was also kinglike; he seemed to be an incarnation of Kamdeva; he was blessed with every lucky sign and endowed with all good qualities.

25. The messenger, glad at heart that his quest was successful, bestowed upon him the marks of betrothal and made preparations for the marriage.

26. Then the bridegroom, with his friends and relations, took his journey to the town of Puran Mall and procession that went with him with its chariots, horsemen, footmen and elephants was like an army.

27. Puran Mall welcomed him in great state and at a time when the stars were propitious gave him his daughter in marriage.

28. A great dowry he gave with her and rejoiced the hearts of those who came in the bridal party with gifts; each received according to his rank; then he sent his daughter to the home of her husband.

29. And a messenger was sent to announce the happy tidings of their coming to the parents of the bridegroom and they were delighted and welcomed them with signs of great joy.

30. When the bridegroom with his bride entered the house great gifts were bestowed on the needy; the female members of the family rejoiced when they saw the bride for a lucky bride is a great blessing to a house.

31. At her coming the fortune of the family increased; wealth flowed in abundantly—jewels of every kind, gold, silver and every precious thing so that they could not be counted for number.

32. Elephants, horses, palkis, raths and such like things, servants, maids and attendants grew in number day by day.

33. The name of a virtuous man is spread through the length and breadth of the land; his family increases; his wealth and possessions multiply.

34. The bride came like Lakshmi in human guise; therefore her name was changed to Manik Devi; in beauty also she was like a goddess.

35. The happiness of the two was like that of Indra and his consort in heaven who delight in singing and music and the dance.

36. Bliss such as heavenly beings know was theirs; the happiness which flows from good deeds was theirs also; their love was like that of the chatak-pakehi for the water which falls from the clouds.

37. Manik Chand, like a king, came to Murshidabad in fair Bengal and built him a banking house there.

38. The Emperor of Delhi gave him high position and nobles, gentry, soldiers and all men obeyed his wishes.

39. Farrukhsiyar, the Emperor, gave him the title of Seth, and the proclamation of his title was made throughout the empire.

40. And all the wealth of Bengal was his. His son, named Fateh Chand, was born like Indra in heaven.

41. To him the Emperor of Delhi gave deeds with the title of Jagat Seth, which means "Lord of the World" and he became the ornament of the state and the pillar of his family.

42. Who became Jagat Seth after him and the saviour of his race? He had two sons, like to the sun and the moon.

43. Seth Ananda Chand and Daya Chand were their names and they were like manifestations of Indra and Kamdeva.

44. And the son of Seth Anand Chand was Mahtab Rao and the son of Daya Chand was Rup Chand—possessors of many virtues.

45. Manik Devi was exceedingly blessed inasmuch as her sons and grandsons were as jewels recovered from the ocean. The children of the other six sons of Hiranand were also men of note and of great ability in their callings.

46. The cousins and their wives lived together in great friendship and happiness. They formed a goodly company like that of Indra and the gods in heaven; and the fortune of the family increased day by day.

47. In the morning they worshipped the god Jina and listened to the teaching of pious preceptors whom they served with great regard; all the rules and ceremonial rites enjoined for each day those they duly observed.

48. They spent their money in the seven ways consecrated by the Jain religion and gave relief also to the poor and needy. Mataji⁸⁵ duly observed all the ceremonies enjoined by the holy ones.

49. So likewise did her sons and grandsons feiling in nought. They were wealthy and of liberal hearts and it was pleasant to them to give to others.

85. The Mother, i.e., Manik Devi.

50. Manik Chand, having acquired great reputation in this world, left for the heavenly home on the tenth day of the new moon of the month of Magh, Samvat 1771.

51. Throughout the days of mourning the renowned Sati, Mataji, told her beads and fasted and practised other austerities which cannot be fully described; and all the world began to admire her.

52. It became her great desire to repair to the hill of Parasnath if haply the sight of the god might assuage her grief.

53. And when her son knew of her desire he formed an assembly to go to the hill.

54. At his request the lords of the districts through which the assembly was to pass repaired the roads and constructed new ones.

55. Invitations to join the assembly were issued in all the countries around with money for the expenses of the journey.

56. Those that asked received horses, carriages, tents and conveyances of different kinds.

57. People came from all quarters and when they were assembled astrologers were charged to appoint an auspicious moment to begin the journey.

58. And so she started with the assembly at an auspicious moment in a good day when all the stars were favourable.

59. The assembly had chosen Seth Anand chand to be their leader and he set out in right royal state with his brother Seth Daya Chand.

60. With joy and great pomp the assembly set out to visit the god of the Jains. There were tents of velvet and embroidery.

61. There was red broad cloth, calicoes from the Carnatic and covers of different hues. On the way men flocked to see the sight and when they departed they said "Indra has come down from heaven."

62. The elephants were richly caparisoned with howdahs, umbrellas and covers.

63. There were swift steeds of Camboja with harness of gold and silver and decked with jewels.

64. Innumerable vehicles also and chariots and palanquins of every kind. Rajas and Ranas knew not such wealth as was displayed in this procession.

65. Armed guards and horsemen accompanied the procession—men zealous in the performance of their duty.

66. The elephants bore bands of musicians and their banners floated in the air. The Rajas of the neighbouring countries gazed at the sight with awe.

67. Holy men and women of the Svetambara sect of the Jains were there and followers of the six systems of philosophy; the number of suppliants could not be counted.

68. Prominent among the 84 clans in the assembly were the Oswal, Srinial and Purwar; among them were many very rich men to whom the leader showed due respect.

69. The first stopping place was Burdwan where the 24th Tirthankar, Mahavira observed Chaturmasya. Thence they came to Champapuri where the sight of the temple of Jineswar filled them with joy.

70. At Pachete they visited the temple of Raghunathji in which the Mahasati Situ also dwells; here they made some stay to see the forest, the hills and the monkeys that abounded there.

71. Next they halted at Bundapuri and having worshipped the Jineswar acquired much merit; then they arrived at the foot of the Sekharjis and deemed their lives had been blessed when they saw the sacred hills.

72. Then they ascended the hill and saw the Jineswar; they performed the Snatri Puja and consecrated a temple; and thus was the heart's desire of the Mataji fulfilled.

73. She made offering to the Jineswar of ornaments of gold set with jewels; she performed the Satravedi Puja and saw and did worship to the twenty temples above where twenty of the Tirthankars attained wisdom and salvation, thus spreading the Jain religion.

74. For three days they lived on the top of the hill and worshipped in the temples with much respect and reverence, acquiring great merit and attaining the purpose for which they were born.

75. Then they descended to the foot of the hills and the leader of the assembly did honour to his attendants and followers; he invited them to feast with him and presented the guests with coins of gold.

76. Those who had accompanied the party offered a garland to Seth Anand Chand and they praised and blessed him for the good work he had done.

77. The assembly returned home rejoicing and there was great joy in the city also; men said "great praise has Manik Devi won for she has done all that wealth can do."

78. Her reputation for piety spread throughout the length and breadth of the land for it was she who had taken an assembly to Sikharj and spent vast wealth thereon.

79. After her return from the pilgrimage, in her joy she resolved to construct a silver throne for the Jain temple in her dwelling house and to place on the throne a god made of gold and jewels; and this she did.

80. In the morning she used to worship for three hours in her temple and then she would utter the anukar mantra; after this she gave alms and broke her fast.

81. She would fast for two days and eat on the third day but should other

days appointed for fasting intervene these also she joyfully observed and broke her fast at the end of the period; this rule she strictly observed while she lived.

82. She would listen to the reading of the Scriptures for six hours; she recited mantras by way of jap thrice a day—in the morning, at mid-day, and in the evening; on the eighth and fourteenth days of the moon she applied herself to the spread of her religion and twice a day, in the morning and evening, she did penance for her sins.

83. She would never eat young vegetables; she gave alms daily; none could excel her in the practices of religion—no, neither Raja nor Rana.

84. It was during the lifetime of Manik Devi that Jain temples, dharm-salas and poshals began to be built in Bengal; there were none before for there were few Jains in the country but during her time they came in numbers.

85. Only a few of the inhabitants of Murshidabad were Jains but owing to her patronage they increased in number to a thousand.

86. Those that arrived without food or clothing or money the revered Mataji supplied with everything.

87. The Mataji heaped jewels on those who beforetime had not even a gold ring in their possession.

88. In the Satya Yuga, Karna, Vikram, and Bhoja were famed for their charity but in the Kali Yuga Manik Devi has been surpassed by none.

89. Since her arrival in this city it has moved in the paths of advancement and progress.

Here follow details of her numerous fasts and other acts of asceticism.

90. Thus she fasted for twenty-six years, eating every third day only, taking no thought for her body for she received power of endurance from on high.

100. Scant was the sustenance she took when she broke her fast for the very morsels she ate were all counted.

101. Though her asceticism reduced her to a skeleton yet she departed not from her practice one whit.

102. She gave lacs in charity; she did great good; she supported an innumerable number of her fellow-creatures and from them acquired merit.

103. The world had no charm for her, nor envy; she was a storehouse of forgiveness and mercy; she knew not gladness nor ever felt grief for she was above these things.

104. There are four kinds of virtue—of gifts, of character, of austerities and of meditation; these four were entwined in the heart of Mataji.

105. Her happiness was the happiness of the wife of Indra; for her body she cared nought; in her prayer she remembered the wise men who have attained to Nirvana.

106 Her name was great; her relations many; her family was flourishing. Her fortune, too, was great in that she bore in her womb a Jagat Seth.

107. Her son ever paid heed to her wishes and approached her with reverence thrice a day.

108. So charitable was she that to one who asked a hundred she gave a thousand and to one who asked a thousand she would give one lac. A human being was to her as her god.

109. Every day was marked by charity and virtue but during the last year of her life her gifts increased.

110. She gave clothing or food or whatever was asked of her. In this year she showered gold like rain from heaven.

111. She gave gold to all and so obtained great fame in the world; no one has surpassed her in charity to this day.

112. She blessed her sons, her grandsons and all the members of her family wishing them long life, prosperity, peace and happiness.

113. In the temple before her god with purity of heart and thought she vowed to eat no more; but she refrained not from charity, nor omitted to hear the words of Scripture, nor ceased to acquire merit.

114. With her thoughts fixed on the god of her religion she asked for pardon from all her fellow-creatures. Then Manik Devi departed for the dwelling place of the gods.

115. She breathed her last on the first day of the full moon in the month of Pous, Samvat 1798 when the constellation Pushya was in the ascendant.

116. O blessed lady Manik Devi! Your life was worthy; you attained the object for which you were born; you have made your name famous by asceticism and charity.

118. Blessed is her father Purn Mall and happy her mother.

119. She was like to Jaimanti, Chandanbala, Mrigabati—holy women all—and the Sati Subhadra, who flourished in the fourth age.

120. After them, in this fifth age, she firmly established the Jain religion in which she appeared like an incarnation; for it was written in the Scriptures that virtuous ladies would flourish.

121. Now has the prophecy of Scripture been fulfilled in the person of Manik Devi whom I have personally known.

122. Hearing of her virtuous conduct my heart was filled with joy; the mere mention of her name avails to drive away misery; Even women of ill life who hear of her name and deeds may follow in her footsteps.

123. And these verses were composed by Muni Sri Nihal Chand, a disciple of Upadhyaya Sri Hurak Chand, surnamed Parsha Chandra.

124. On the 13th day after the full moon in the month of Pous, Samvat, 1798, at Murshidabad.

125. Whoever will read or hear them will derive much pleasure and acquire merit through the kindness of the Mahasati Manik Deviji whose biography here ends.

Wealth is acquired by charity;
 Conduct is the source of happiness;
 Religious austerities destroy Karma;
 Virtuous thoughts attain salvation.

CHAPTER 2 JAGAT SETH FATEH CHAND.

1.

A small notebook, written in Hindi, in the the possession of the present head of the family, has preserved a few facts relating to the early years of Fateh Chand. In the year 1757 Samvat (1700 A. D.) while yet a boy and living with his parents at Patna, he was adopted by Manik Chand and joined the latter at Dacca. A few years later came the migration to Murshidabad. We have seen that in 1711 he was known to the English as an eminent merchant and that in 1712 he, as well as Manik Chand, received marks of the favour of Murshid Kuli Khan. After co-operating with Manik Chand for a period of fourteen years he was well qualified to take his father's place as head of the house and to become the chief adviser of Murshid Kuli Khan and his right-hand man in all matters of finance.

In March 1715 Fateh Chand was at Patna. The Surman embassy was there and Kwajah Sarhad, Surman's second in command, alleging that it was dangerous to proceed, wished to delay the embassy at Patna. He declared that some of the principal inhabitants of Patna supported him in this course and one of the names he cited was that of Fateh Chand.¹

About the same time Fateh Chand obtained from the Emperor the title of Seth. The farman conferring the title is dated the 5th year of the reign of the Emperor Farrukhsiyar and is couched in similar terms to the farman granted to Manik Chand. The farman was presented to the Victoria Memorial at Calcutta by the head of the family on the occasion of Lord Curzon's visit to the ancient home of the Seths on the 1st March 1902.

Farrukhsiyar was put to death in 1719. The Syed brothers, who had raised him to the throne, were also the instruments of his downfall. Two puppet emperors played a kingly part for a few months after the manner of the Merovings of old and then the powerful Mayors of the Palace drew forth Roshen

1. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. II, Part 2, p. 24.

Akhtar from his retirement in the castle of Selimgarh and proclaimed him Emperor with the title of Muhammad Shah.

It was the general belief in Bengal that Murshid Kuli Khan would suffer the fate of his master, the Emperor Farrukhsiyar, for Syed Abdu-llah Khan, Muhammad Shah's Vizier, was the Nawab's "declared enemy." In fact promises of greater preferment were held out to him in order to entice him to Court but "he, being thoroughly sensible of the treachery designed against him, has as often found excuses for his staying in Bengal and 'tis the general opinion of all persons that he will defend himself where he now is till he is cut off."² The danger passed away with the disappearance of the two Syed brothers from the scene and Murshid Kuli Khan despatched the tribute of Bengal to the Emperor together with a complimentary present from himself. The Nawab attempted to force the European nations to contribute towards this present and directed Seth Fateh Chand and two other officers to enforce his wishes.

Seth Fateh Chand and his two colleagues summoned the vakils of the English and Dutch and informed them that they had been appointed by the Nawab to demand a nazranah³ for the Emperor from the English and Dutch which was to be paid into their hands. The Dutch were to pay Rs. 50,000. The sum to be paid by the English was not mentioned but their wakil was told that the Nawab intended to stop the trade of the English in Bengal if they did not comply with his demand. This was early in March, 1721. By May the Nawab had met with no response to his demand and so he ordered Kantu, the Company's broker at the Cassimbazar factory, to be seized to answer certain charges, the nature of which is now rather obscure. The result of this measure was the dislocation of the trade at Cassimbazar for the Company's servants at the factory there carried on all negotiations with their Indian merchants by means of Kantu. Further the President and Council felt that the Nawab's proceedings were "an insult that must be attended with the worst of consequences should we tamely bear it" and resolved to oppose firmly this method of the Nawab to bring pressure to bear upon them so that he might fleece them in the matter of the nazranah. They gave instructions to their wakil to raise the King's duhai⁴ in open court at Hugli, a step already taken at Murshidabad, and ordered a reinforcement of European soldiers to proceed to Cassimbazar.

At the same time Governor Feake wrote a letter to the Nawab protesting against his proceedings. Meanwhile the Chief at Cassimbazar had secured the

2. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*. Proof Sheets of Vol. III, p. 105.

3. A ceremonial present, properly an offering from an inferior to a superior. Hobson Jobson, p. 634.

4. "An exclamation shouted aloud by a petitioner for redress at a Court of Justice. . . . It has a kind of analogy, as Thavenot pointed out over 200 years ago, to the old Norman *Haro! Haro! viens à mon aide, mon Prince!*" Hobson Jobson, p. 321.

interest of Asad Khan, an officer in favour with the Nawab, who undertook to place a letter from the Chief in the Nawab's hands. The first attempt, made by Asad Khan's deputy, was a failure for the Nawab angrily refused to receive the letter. A personal application made by Asad Khan met with a more favourable reception and the Nawab ordered the letter to be brought to him when he was at leisure. After perusing it he sent for Seth Fateh Chand and directed him to enquire "into the story of the broker's wife hanging herself." Seth Fateh Chand sent for Kantu and caused him to be examined at the Nawab's kachahri where he spoke strongly in Kantu's favour. The result of his representations to the Nawab, supported by those of Asad Khan was the release of the broker in a handsome manner, "the Nawab bidding him tell his masters, that though he was a servant of the English yet he was a subject and tenant of the King's, and as there were such reports he could not avoid examining into the truth of them, which he had thus long deferred, being very busy in dispatching the King's treasure and that now he might go to the Factory and tell them to go on with their business as usual." Nothing more was heard about a nazranah to the Emperor.⁵

In August of the same year the English made another attempt to obtain the right of coining into rupees at the Murshidabad mint the treasure which they received from Europe. The Company's servants at Cassimbazar used their utmost endeavours to gain over to their cause some of the Nawab's officers but all their efforts were fruitless. They were informed "that while Futtichund is so great with the Nawab, they can have no hopes of that grant, he alone having the sole use of the Mint, nor dare any other shroff or merchant buy or coin a rupee's worth of silver."⁶

The Company were thus forced to sell their treasure to Seth Fateh Chand and under the circumstances they had no alternative but to take the price the banker offered. The treasure sent from Europe generally consisted of French and Spanish crowns and was sold by weight. Fateh Chand's offer for two chests of treasure was at the rate of 207 rupees 4 annas for 240 sicca rupees' weight of silver and though the Company held out for some time in the hope of obtaining a better price they were obliged eventually to close with the offer for Seth Fateh Chand would give no more. In the same month (November 1721) ten chests of ducatoons were sent to Cassimbazar for disposal and there was another dispute with Fateh Chand about the price. The banker offered 2 rupees 7 annas 3 pies for each ducatoon. The English were unwilling to let them go at that price declaring that they had always sold them at 2 rupees 7

5. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*. Proof Sheets of Vol. III, pp. 322, 340, 341, 350.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 369.

annas 6 pies each, but at length they agreed "to divide the difference" and accept 2 rupees 7 annas 4½ pies per ducatton.⁷ Evidently the English merchants of the time were not bad hands at driving a bargain when they stood out for a difference of a half-penny on each ducatton nor did Seth Fateh Chand take an unscrupulous advantage of the monopoly he possessed when he agreed to a price one farthing per ducatton below that which the English would willingly have accepted. Indeed the Bengal records of the Company show that the relations between the Company's servants and the house of Jagat Seth were founded on mutual respect and mutual confidence and though, as we shall see, disputes sometimes arose between them some of which entailed serious consequences, yet the banker could say with justice that he had suffered on account of his trust in the English while the English were bound, in their official capacity as servants of the East India Company, to deny liability for debts incurred by some of the Company's servants in their private capacity as traders on their own behalf.

In the year 1722, owing to some reason which cannot be ascertained now, it was very difficult to obtain money throughout northern India. The Emperor himself felt the pinch severely,⁸ while in Bengal money was so scarce that, at the end of March, although Murshid Kuli Khan had received several peremptory orders to despatch the Bengal treasure to Delhi, he was still 35 lakhs short of the sum required. To add to his perplexities it appeared that Muhammad Shah's new Vizier, the celebrated Nizam-ul-Mulk, was not his friend for he had refused to accept the nazranah which the Nawab had sent to him on his appointment.⁹

The sequel of these events may possibly be seen in a letter dated the 18th June from the Chief and Council at Cassimbazar¹⁰ in which they report to the President and Council at Calcutta that they had disposed of more bullion to Seth Fateh Chand "who, having been under the displeasure of the Nabob and, as reported, fleeced out of Five Lauck of Rupees, could not pay them ready money for all the bullion" but they hoped to receive the remainder of the money the next day. Assuming the report to have been correct it would mean that Murshid Kuli Khan, in his difficulties, had turned to Seth Fateh Chand for help, that the banker had not responded in a manner adequate to the Nawab's necessities and that then the Nawab violently extorted money from Fateh Chand.

7. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*. Proof sheets of Vol. III, pp. 377-8, 382. The ducatton was worth five to six shillings. The exchange value of the rupee at this time was from 2s. 6d. to 2s. 9d. (India Office Records, Consultations for January, 1722-23.)

8. See page 35.

9. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*. Proof sheets of what was apparently Vol. IV, p. 9.

10. India Office Records—Bengal Consultations. Consultation Monday, 24th June, 1722.

On this it may be remarked that extorting money from Seth Fateh Chand was a most dangerous game for the Nawab to play and only sheer desperation would have made him resort to it. The statement, too, is admittedly merely a rumour which seemed a plausible explanation of the facts and is not given on the authority of their vakil¹¹ from whom the English at Cassimbazar derived reliable information relating to the affairs of the durbar at Murshidabad. A more probable explanation of the incident—one agreeing with the events in the life of Seth Fateh Chand which immediately followed—is that the banker, at a time of great financial stringency, came to the aid not only of Murshid Kuli Khan but also of the Emperor, Muhammad Shah.

If there had been such a cloud between the Nawab and the banker it was soon dispelled and the latter, apparently, had soon forgiven the act of extortion which rumour had ascribed to the Nawab. In August we find the English applying to Seth Fateh Chand as the channel of easiest access to the Nawab. An accusation, involving the sum of Rs. 50,000, had been made against the Dutch Vakil at Dacca and, by the Nawab's orders, the English vakil at Murshidabad had been arrested, merely because he happened to be the uncle of the accused man and near at hand. The English demanded his release which the Nawab was willing to grant provided that the vakil gave security in writing for any demands that might be made against him. Thereupon Captain Borlace, the commandant of the soldiers at Cassimbazar, was sent to Seth Fateh Chand to assure him that the English would never consent to such an unjust measure and "that if the Nabob would not release him they would take such measures as should." Fateh Chand immediately went to the Nawab and informed him that the English had sent the captain of their soldiers to demand the vakil. The Nawab ordered him to be released and delivered to Captain Borlace and ordered the Dutch vakil at Murshidabad to give the security first demanded from the English vakil.¹²

2.

Seth Fateh Chand had two sons—Anand Chand and Dya Chand. By this period the elder of the two had grown up and entered the firm so that the house began to be known as that of Seth Fateh Chand and Anand Chand. The earliest extant record of this is contained in a resolution of the Bengal Council, dated the 13th May, 1723 which runs as follows:—"Sent Futtichund Anannchund having paid into the Hon'ble Company's Cash the 9th Inst. ten thousand rupees Madrass, desiring a Bill of Debt be given him for the same.

11. The authorised representative of the English at the Nawab's durbar.

12. Bengal Consultations (India Office Records). Consultation of Thursday, 30th August, 1722.

Agreed a Bill be given accordingly."¹³

It is probable, however, that by this date the name of the firm used by the English had already become obsolete for in the fourth year of the reign of Muhammad Shah, that is, some time between the beginning of November 1722 and the end of October 1723,¹⁴ Seth Fateh Chand received from the Emperor the title of Jagat Seth and his son Anand Chand the title of Seth so that the name of the banking-house became "Jagat Seth Fateh Chand and Seth Anand Chand." The correct name does not appear in the Bengal records till the year 1740.

The original farman of the Emperor which is still in the possession of the family has been thus translated:—"At this victorious hour and happy moment, the world-obeyed command of sunny lustre receives the honour of issue that, from the Court of eternal sovereignty, Seth Fateh Chand—with the award of the title of Jagat Seth as a hereditary distinction and the bestowal of magnificent robes of honour, an elephant and a pearl earring, and his son Anand Chand with the title of Seth and the gift of robes of honour and a pearl earring—have hoarded the treasure of trust and dignity. It is proper that civil and ministerial officers and all secretaries of the present and future, living within the protected territories should designate the aforesaid Jagat Seth Fateh Chand and also designate his son Seth Anand Chand. They should deem this imperative from the presence of glorious majesty.

Written on the 12th Rajab, in the fourth year of the exalted reign."

A tradition has been handed down in the family to the effect that Fateh Chand received the title as a reward for services rendered to the Emperor. There was a famine in Delhi and great was the suffering of its inhabitants. Fateh Chand who was in the city at the time, appeared at Court where he was received with honour and undertook to relieve the people from their distress. He seems to have recommended the temporary issue of some kind of paper money for he requested the Emperor to announce publicly that hundis¹⁵ would be placed in circulation in the city. This was done with the happy result that the famine disappeared. The Emperor was highly pleased with Fateh Chand and conferred upon him the title of Jagat Seth. There certainly was a great scarcity in Delhi when Muhammad Shah ascended the throne in 1719 but "from that moment provisions that had arisen to an immoderate price, commenced becoming cheaper, and once more plenty shewed its face in every

13. Bengal Consultations (India Office Records), Consultation of Monday, 13th May, 1723.

14. The English at Cassimbazar write at the beginning of November, 1721, that the siccness of the 3rd year of Muhammad Shah "are just come out." (Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*. Proof sheets of Vol. III, p. 377.)

15. Bankers' drafts.

market." 16 The troubles that followed and the dilatory methods of the Mughal Court would explain the delay in issuing the farman. It may be pardonable to doubt, however, whether the later Mughal Emperors exhibited much concern for the sufferings of their subjects and in any case it is difficult to understand how the circulation of hundis could avail in such a crisis. But if the famine was of a financial nature this fact in the story becomes of the greatest significance and we know that there was an exceptional dearth of money in northern India at the beginning of 1722. During the second and third years of the reign of Muhammad Shah the treasury was empty, the army ill-paid and warlike projects abandoned perforce. 17 Urgent demands were sent for the Bengal tribute while we read in the record that Murshid Kuli Khan "is under very affliction that money is so scarce." 18 On the other hand in the sixth year of his reign we find the Emperor is able to grant a kror of rupees to one of his generals for the purpose of raising an army and maintain this army in the field for some months at a cost of five lakhs a month. 19

Here clearly is to be found the kernel of truth embedded in the story. An Emperor who had been rescued from such difficulties would naturally have hailed his deliverer as Jagat Seth, "the banker of the world," and have authorised him to hand down the title to his descendants.

Such a title may appear strange to us and it was evidently not understood by the English in Bengal at the time. Up to 1740 it is seldom found in the records while in that year the English seem to have been under the impression that Jagat Seth and Fateh Chand were separate members of the firm at Murshidabad as the following extract from the Cash Account for July 1740 will show: —

By Juggutseat, Futtichund and Seat Anunchund

paid them as per Order of Council this Day

Principal Sicca ... Rs 121000

Interest from the 5th April is 3 mos. 26 days

at 12 per cent. ... Rs. 4719

Sicca Rupees ... 125719

Batta 15' 8p. ct. ... 19486'7'3

145205'7'320

16. *Seir Mutaqherin*, Vol. I, p. 153.

17. *Seir Mutaqherin*, Vol. I, pp. 223, 251, 253.

18. Wilson, *Early Records of the English in Bengal*. Proof sheets of Vol. IV, p. 9.

19. *Seir Mutaqherin*, Vol. I, pp. 270, 273.

20. *Bengal Consultations* (India Office Records). The *casum* occurs again in the Consultation of the 29th March 1742, when the Council record that they have taken up at interest

The translator of the *Seir Mutaqherin*, himself a European, writing in 1786, considered it necessary to call the attention of his readers in a footnote to the fact that Jagat Seth was a title and not a name.²¹ At Murshidabad, however, the title was scrupulously used by the Nawab and his officers and there was no misunderstanding there of the high rank attached to it. The holder held a position of hereditary dignity superior to that of any zamindar in Bengal²² and his place at the Durbar was on the left hand of the Nawab.²³ An event of later years throws light on this point. After the death of Jagat Seth Fateh Chand his two grandsons, who were cousins, jointly carried on the affairs of the firm. The junior partner was subsequently ennobled with the title of Maharaja. The senior partner had the title of Jagat Seth which was a higher one than that of Maharaja.

Another tradition handed down in the family may be referred to this period. It is said that Jagat Seth Fateh Chand "was held in such honour at court, that it was proposed to supersede Murshid Kuli Khan, who then lay under the imperial displeasure, and to appoint Fateh Chand to the Government of Bengal. But the banker refused to occupy the post that was filled by the great patron of his family, and by means of his friendly offices procured a pardon for the Nawab. In the farman issued on this occasion, it was expressly stated that the imperial grace was only exercised in consideration for the earnest prayers of Fateh Chand with whom the Nawab was instructed to consult henceforward on all matters of State."²⁴ An old memorandum respecting the family of Harakh Chand, fourth Jagat Seth, printed in Long's "Unpublished Records of Government"²⁵ does not mention the appointment of Fateh Chand as Governor but says that "at his intercession the Emperor pardoned the Nabob Jaffier Khan, the Subahdar of Bengal, who had incurred the royal displeasure, and restored that officer to his confidence and regard." There is no historical proof of this statement but it is quite consistent with the state of affairs in 1722. At the time it was believed that the Vixier Nizam-ul-Mulk was unfriendly towards Murshid Kuli Khan²⁶ and the Emperor would certainly have been greatly displeased at the delay in sending the Bengal tribute for that year. Fateh Chand, too, had exceptional opportunities during 1722 of doing such a service to Mur-

the sum of 110,000 sicca rupees and signed a note of hand for the amount payable on demand to "Jaggatsent, Futtichand and Seet Ammichand."

21. *Seir Mutaqherin*, Vol. I, p. 356 note.

22. Hunter, *Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. ix, p. 252.

23. There is a picture in the palace at Murshidabad showing Jagat Seth occupying this place at the Nawab's Durbar.

24. Hunter, *Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. ix, p. 254.

25. pp. 578, 579.

26. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*. Proof sheets of Vol. IV, p. 9.

shid Kuli Khan while in 1723 we find him called "the Nabob's chief favourite"²⁷ which would be natural under the circumstances.

To this period we may ascribe the foundation of the great influence that Fateh Chand and his successors possessed at the Court of Delhi. Whenever a khilat²⁸ was sent to the Nawab a similar distinction was conferred on Jagat Seth. The Emperor presented Fateh Chand with a fine emerald seal with his title of Jagat Seth engraved upon it desiring that he would preserve it and hand it down to his posterity.²⁹ A striking instance of the power of the heads of this family at Delhi was the manner in which they obtained farmans ratifying the appointment of the Nawab. They were not mere agents between the Nawab and the Court. Their co-operation appears to have been absolutely essential. There is no direct evidence that Fateh Chand obtained farmans for Shuja-ud-daula and Sarfaraz Khan, the next two Nawabs of Bengal, but such evidence as there is favours that supposition. With regard to the former, on the one hand Fateh Chand did not aid Murshid Kuli Khan when he tried to obtain a farman for his favourite, Sarfaraz Khan,³⁰ and Murshid Kuli Khan's efforts were fruitless. On the other hand Shuja-ud-daula, the comparatively unimportant Deputy Nazim of Orissa, was successful and Fateh Chand was one of his well-wishers.³¹ With regard to the latter more than one historian was inclined to believe that he never obtained a farman from Court.³² It was Fateh Chand who obtained for Alivardi Khan a farman appointing him Nawab of Behar in his own right³³ When Alivardi Khan had defeated and slain Sarfaraz Khan in battle it was Fateh Chand who obtained for him a farman confirming him in the Government of Bengal. Holwell asserts that it was a sham farman fabricated by the Seths and characteristically goes on to say "that Alivardi Khan was never confirmed in the government by a real Phirmaund, is a fact that admits of no doubt."³⁴ The fact admits of so much doubt that the whole statement may be summarily dismissed as a fabrication of Holwell himself. It is not the only item of information that we owe to Holwell alone. It is not the only charge that he brought against a man with-

27. Bengal Consultations (India Office Records). Consultation of Monday, 2nd September, 1723.

28. A dress of honour.

29. Long's Unpublished Records of Government, p. 579. Hunter's Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol. ix, pp. 254, 255.

30. Rai Balkrishan is mentioned as the chief agent of Murshid Kuli Khan at the imperial court at this time, *Riyazu-s-salat*, p. 257.

31. *Sair Mutaqherin*, Vol. I, p. 322.

32. Stewart, *History of Bengal*, p. 437 (note). Scott, *History of the Decan*, etc. (1794), Vol. 2, p. 317.

33. Scrymgeour's *Reflections*, p. 33.

34. Holwell's *Interesting Historical Events* (1766), Part I, pp. 109, 110.

out a shred of evidence. It is not the only story he concocted to serve his own ends. The justification of these remarks will be given later. Here it must suffice to state that Holwell's interests in making his assertion is plain. In his history of the period his main object seems to be to vilify Alivardi Khan and his brother Haji Ahamad. He presses into his service all the scandalous gossip of the bazars that he was able to procure. As a rule he does not call Alivardi Khan by his name. He is "the Usurper." But if Alivardi Khan received a farman from the Emperor confirming him in the government of Bengal—and most historians declare that he did³⁵—he had as good a title as any of his predecessors and the name of "usurper" was absurd. Therefore, says Holwell, the farman was a forgery of Jagat Seth's.

Siraj-ud-daula was the next Nawab and the relations between him and the Jagat Seth of the time were far from cordial. The consequence was that, for some time, Siraj-ud-daula was unable to obtain a farman from the Emperor. Jagat Seth's remissness in the matter led to a scene in full durbar. Siraj-ud-daula reproached him, slapped his face and put him in prison.³⁶ Again Clive relied upon Jagat Seth to obtain a farman from the Emperor confirming Mir Jafar as Nawab of Bengal and it was through Jagat Seth that Clive received his patent creating him an Omrah of the Empire.³⁷

3.

In August, 1723, the English in Bengal were involved in a long dispute with the Nawab.³⁸ In consequence of the oppression of the Zamindar of Malda they had removed their factory from that place to Mugdanpore which was quite close to Malda but outside the Zamindar's jurisdiction. The Zamindar retaliated with an attempt to stop the English trade and what was worse, the removal of the factory angered the Nawab. The English at Cassimbazar applied to Jagat Seth Fatch Chand and he appears to have acted in their behalf but without much success for they reported to Calcutta that "as yet there is little hopes of Redress, Futtichund having refused to interpose any farther in the English Durbar affairs."³⁹

The Council at Calcutta met to consider these reports from Cassimbazar and resolved to send soldiers to Malda. "Ordered also," the resolution continues, "that a letter be wrote to Futtichund (the Nabob's chief favourite) to represent these dishonourable and illegal practices, which if he does not pre-

35. *Seir Mutakhirin*, Vol. I, pp. 355, 372. *Riyazu-s-salatîn*, p. 322. *Scott's Deccan*, Vol. 2, p. 319. *Stewart, History of Bengal*, p. 445.

36. *Long's Unpublished Records of Government*, p. 77.

37. *Hill's Bengal in 1756-57*.

38. *Bengal Consultations (India Office Records)*.

39. *Consultation*, Monday 2nd September, 1723.

vail to have speedily remedied will be attended with the highest resentment."⁴⁰

Fateh Chand promised to render the Company all the service he could and endeavoured to make good his promise with the result that he was rebuked by the Nawab for his forwardness on behalf of the English.⁴¹ Nevertheless, in the weeks that followed the English tried every method to induce Fateh Chand to represent their case to the Nawab but, as was to be expected under the circumstances, "without producing any good effect."⁴² In October the Zamindar of Malda died but the Government of Rajmahal had been sent against the factory with 500 horse and 300 gunmen and the English at Cassimbazar applied to Fateh Chand for an order prohibiting this officer from molesting their people but they reported on the 22nd October that they had not been able to get any answer from him. A week later when the Nawab's forces seized all those who had dealings with the English at Malda the chief of the Cassimbazar factory sent the English wakil to the Durbar to give the dufai and sent their broker to Fateh Chand "to represent the unjust treatment, that he may use his Interest with the Nabob not to persist therein and thereby oblige us to have recourse to our military force, which we should do if he continued to impede our Hon'ble Masters' affairs."⁴³ Again on the 28th November the Company's servants at Cassimbazar reported that they had once more represented the state of affairs at Mugdanpore to Fateh Chand "whereof he took little notice."⁴⁴

In truth the Nawab was inexorable and all the officers of the Durbar were aware of the fact. No one of them dared so much as speak to any of the English or their servants.⁴⁵ In vain the English defeated the forces sent against Malda, in vain they stopped all Muhamma-dan ships passing Fort William. In the meantime their trade in Bengal was being ruined. By the 3rd January 1724 they were obliged to withdraw their factory from Malda "it not being possible to accommodate those differences on any other terms at present."⁴⁶

During 1724 the English made many endeavours to re-settle at Malda. In June they wrote to the Nawab asking for permission to visit him on the subject and his answer was conveyed to them by Jagat Seth Fateh Chand. After relating the reasons of the Nawab's displeasure with the English Fateh Chand informed them that the Nawab would not admit their visit without a pay-

40. *Ibid.*

41. Consultation, 16th September, 1723.

42. Consultation, 22nd October, 1723.

43. Consultation, 4th November, 1723.

44. Consultation, 2nd December, 1723.

45. "The Nabob persists in the Gentlemen of Mugdanpoor's being recalled and not an officer of the Durbar will speak to any of our People." (Consultation 23rd December, 1723).

46. Consultation, 9th January, 1723-24.

ment of Rs. 5,000 and if they were desirous of resettling the factory at Malda they should have his permission to do so for Rs. 20,000 more.⁴⁷

In 1725 the relations between the Nawab and the English were better and when the Council at Cassimbazar informed him that their Chief, Henry Frankland, was leaving for Calcutta to become Governor of Fort William and wished to pay him a farewell visit "he acquainted them by Futtichundsaw, the person that delivered their message, that his indisposition was so great that he could not see him but as he had always been so he should continue a friend to the English."⁴⁸

On the 28th March, 1726, the Company "desire Futtichundsaw to write to his Gomastah to supply our Factory at Dacca with what money they shall want"⁴⁹ to which Fateh Chand replied that he had sent orders to his gomastah at Dacca to supply the factory there with Rs. 50,000.⁵⁰ On the 29th September the Council at Dacca report that "a general exchange of officers in the mint has been a hindrance to their coinage yet they have kept their business going on by agreeing with Futtichund's Gomastah⁵¹ who has supplied them with Dussassa rupees and he is to receive their siccaas."⁵²

In December, 1726, another big dispute, in which Fateh Chand played a prominent part, broke out between the Nawab and the English. Abdul Rahim, one of the Nawab's officers,—a man who had acquired an unenviable notoriety throughout Bengal for his cruel treatment of these zamindars who failed in their payments of the revenue⁵³—suddenly demanded from the English an additional rent of Rs. 44,000 for their Calcutta towns⁵⁴ and followed up his demand by seizing their vakil at Murshidabad and by threatening to treat all their merchants in a similar manner.

The English looked to Jagat Seth Fateh Chand for aid as they had done in the former dispute. The President wrote several letters assuring Jagat Seth that the English would never comply with the unjust demand made on them and hoped that he and the officers at the Durbar would accommodate the affair and cause their vakil to be released.⁵⁵

Jagat Seth's interposition at this stage of the dispute was a matter of ex-

47. Ibid, 29th June, 1724.

48. Ibid, 27th December, 1725.

49. Ibid, 28th March, 1726.

50. Ibid, 11th April, 1726.

51. "A native agent or factor"—Hobson-Jobson, p. 324.

52. Consultation, 10th October, 1726.

53. Stewart, History of Bengal, p.

54. Consultation, 12th December, 1726.

55. Consultation, 13th February, 1726-27.

treme difficulty. The Calcutta towns formed a part of the Nawab's own jagir, of which Abdul Rahim was steward, and no one at the Durbar dared to speak to the Nawab on behalf of the English in a matter relating to his own estates.⁵⁷ Besides the plain truth of the matter was that the Nawab wanted money from the English and meant to get it. Whether the money was given by the English in the form of additional rent for the land they held from him or under some other name was a matter of indifference to him.

Abdul Rahim took further measures to make the English comply with his demand. Some of their merchants at Murshidabad were arrested, their broker, Kantu, was forced to take refuge in the factory at Cassimbazar, while the rest of their merchants ran away or hid themselves to avoid being seized and put into prison. In reply the English recalled their wakil from Hugli after he had first given the King's duhai in the most public manner and insisted on having Abdul Rahim's unjust proceedings entered in all the newspapers.⁵⁸ By so doing they ensured the matter reaching the ears of the Emperor. They also resolved to allow no ship belonging to an Indian merchant to pass Fort William. Abdul Rahim in turn redoubled his efforts to capture every servant belonging to the Company as well as every merchant who was suspected of having traded with the English. The wakil was rigorously confined and treated so cruelly that he begged the English at Cassimbazar to send him Rs. 125 "which would procure him liberty to eat and save his back for a day or two."⁵⁹

So matters went on till the middle of February 1727. Then the Nawab received a letter from the Governor of Hugli, forwarding a complaint from the owners of ships that they were being ruined and demanding that the customs they had paid should be refunded. Murshid Kuli Khan thereupon sent for Jagat Seth Fateh Chand who was now able to assume the role of mediator between the Nawab and the English. "Late Friday night last," wrote the acting chief of the Cassimbazar factory on Sunday, the 19th February, "the Nabob sent for Futtichundsaw and told him he heard he had near two Lack of rupees ready to go to Hugly and asked him if he was not mad to venture such a large sum when the English were plundering boats and ships on the River and after some discourse asked if any of the English were at Cossimbuzar, to which he replied none of them had left the factory but their Chief was not yet arrived, though if he pleased he would send a Chubdar⁶⁰ for the Broker. The Nabob

57. Consultation, 28th November, 1726.

58. Consultation, 13th February, 1726-27.

59. Consultation, 19th February, 1726-27.

60. Chobdar "a stick bearer," an attendant. The chobdars carry a staff overlaid with silver, Hobson Jobson, p. 294.

smiled and said he would hardly venture to come, and bid him send his own Gomastah, who came and said Futtichund desired to speak with Contoo. They did not think proper to send him, but wrote to Futtichund signifying they would not let him go out of the Factory, unless he would be bound for his safe return, to which he returned answer he wanted to impart something of moment to them, and would send a person proper to be trusted to carry any message between them. What he has to propose they are entirely strangers to."⁶¹

On the 21st Jagat Seth sent his gomastah to the factory. "Would the English," he asked, "make the Nawab a nazranah when their new chief, Mr. Stephenson, arrived if the vakil and the other prisoners were released and the demand relating to the towns given up?" "The Company's servants replied that they had positive orders from Calcutta not to treat on any terms which involved the payment of money but at the same time if the Nawab were willing to make up matters they did not know what the effect of the release of the prisoners would have on the President and his Council. Of one thing they were assured—as long as a man was under confinement the English would listen to no proposals."⁶²

Before instructions could arrive from Calcutta the prisoners were scourged so inhumanly that they despaired of their lives if such severe usage were repeated.⁶³ Shortly afterwards, however, Edward Stephenson, the new chief at Cassimbazar was ordered to acquaint Jagat Seth that the English would readily consent to make the Nawab a handsome present provided that their vakil and merchants were released and the demand on the towns entirely laid aside.

Several conferences followed with Jagat Seth's gomastah "to whom," wrote Mr. Stephenson, "we have represented our grievances in the most pathetick terms hoping thereby to influence Futtichundsaw so far in our favour as to persuade him to undeceive the Nabob, in answer to which Futtichund frankly owned we had reason on our side, but at the same time said that the Nabob before this unhappy affair had been remarkably favourable to us and made use of several instances of the great privileges we enjoyed to induce us to comply with the Nabob's demand, telling us he had spoke a great deal in our favour; but found he (the Nawab) would never be brought to relinquish all though he might remit some part, and at the same time hinted that for thirty thousand rupees a perwanna might be obtained to prevent any like demand for the future to which we replied we would advise the Chief, etc. in Calcutta thereof and then give an answer."

On receipt of this letter the Calcutta Council agreed to empower Stephen-

61. Consultation, 27th February, 1726-27.

62. *Ibid.*

63. *Ibid.*, 6th March, 1726-27.

son to offer the Nawab fifteen or twenty thousand rupees on condition that he would permit them to re-settle the factory at Malda, build a new house at Dacca, and finish the house they were building at Hugli, for he was to acquaint the Nawab, they could not consent to give away the money of their Honourable Masters unless they obtained some benefit by so doing and it would be better their trade should be entirely stopped than that they should tamely and easily comply with every unjust and unreasonable demand made upon them.⁶⁴

This concluded the matter. On the 14th March Stephenson informed the Council that the prisoners had been released "which was brought about by means of Futtichundsaw who prevailed with the Nabob to give the people their freedom and assured him you should acknowledge it as a favour. We hope as Futtichund has given his word the Nabob should be satisfied you will for the service and credit done us take care that he be no sufferer."⁶⁵

The Company received a parwana from the Nawab that no demands of the kind would be made in future and in May paid the Nawab Rs. 20,000.⁶⁶

The English had been very anxious to end this dispute in order to be free to take steps against the establishment of the Ostend East India Company in Bengal. On the 1st April three agents of this Company had arrived at Murshidabad and petitioned the Nawab to allow them to trade on the same footing as the Dutch and French. At the same time as the Rs. 20,000 was paid to the Nawab, the Ostenders, as they are called in the records, had gained over an important officer at the Durbar, "but," wrote Mr. Stephenson on the 7th May, "so long as Futtichundsaw does not espouse their interest (which we are promised he will not) there is no fear of them obtaining any grant from the Nabob." By the 17th May the representatives of the Ostend Company had visited the Nawab but this had cost them Rs. 30,000 "which with the seventy thousand deposited in Futtichund's hands is a pisheasb for the King." When they obtained a farman from the Emperor they were to pay Rs. 50,000 more of which Rs. 25,000 was to go to the Nawab and the remainder to the officers at the durbar who had supported them.⁶⁷

On the 30th May Stephenson reported that "the Ostenders left Syadevad very much disgusted at the disappointment they have met with from the Government for notwithstanding they have paid Rs. 125,000 they have not been able to get his Perwana nor would they have had a Seerpaw had not Futtichundsaw concurred in order to get his note for seventy thousand sicca

64. Consultation, 13th March, 1726-27.

65. Consultation, 20th March, 1726-27.

66. Consultation, 15th May, 1727.

67. Consultations, 17th April, 15th May, 22nd May, 1727.

rupees, deposited three years ago in his hands, which by this stratagem he has done and left them in the lurch."⁶⁸

The note for Rs. 70,000 must refer to the sum deposited with Jagat Seth as a present for the Emperor and two corollaries follow from this. First, it was intended that the money should fall into the hands of the Nawab instead of the Emperor and second, Jagat Seth was acting in accordance with the wishes of the Nawab and not his own when he concurred in the matter mentioned above. Jagat Seth was extremely tenacious of his own interests and strongly opposed any measures of the European nations in Bengal which conflicted with those interests, he fought them when they refused to pay money which he considered his just due, but no evidence can be found in the English records or in the pages of historians that he ever, in the plenitude of his power, extorted money for himself or accepted a bribe in return for the many and great services he rendered the English. This fact is as honourable to the heads of this family as it is extraordinary when the practices of the age and Jagat Seth's exceptionable opportunities of profiting by them, are taken into consideration.

A craving for revenge succeeded the feelings of disgust and disappointment which filled the Ostenders on their departure from Cassimbazar. They made an attack on a ship belonging to Muhammadan merchants and killed some of the Nawab's subjects. The news of these events startled the Nawab and filled him with apprehension of greater mischief if the Ostenders were not speedily pacified—perhaps, too, his conscience did not acquit him of all responsibility for their conduct. He immediately promised them a *parwana* for their trade in Bengal and asked them to send one of their party to receive it. The English had to struggle for some years before the Ostenders were driven from Bengal.⁶⁹

This was one of the last acts of Murshid Kuli Khan. Before the end of June he died and as the date of his death has been variously stated it is worth while to remove all doubt in this matter by quoting from the Bengal Consultations dated Monday, the 3rd July, 1727:—"Yesterday we received a Letter from Edwd. Stephenson Esqr. Chief &c. Council of Cassimbazar Dated the 30th Ultimo advising of the Nabob's Death and that Soufrage Cawn has assumed the administration and set strong Guards over all the great Zamindars."

Two years before Murshid Kuli Khan had built a mosque at Katra, about a mile to the east of his palace and under the stairs leading up to its terrace, trodden every day by the feet of the faithful, he was buried. The mosque

⁶⁸ Consultation, 5th June, 1727.

⁶⁹ Consultation, 12th June, 1727.

itself is now in ruins. The cells where once seven hundred pious Mussulmen chanted the Koran, have vanished. But the tomb of the founder of Murshidabad is still carefully tended. It receives its offerings of flowers. The Koran is read there. In the minds of men Murshid Kuli Khan is now the Zinda Pir, the living saint, who protects them from cholera.

4.

It had been the dearest wish of Murshid Kuli Khan that his grandson, Sarfaraz Khan, should succeed him. But, as we have seen, Sarfaraz Khan had to contend with a formidable rival in the person of his father, Shuja-ud-daula, who had married the daughter of Murshid Kuli Khan. Shuja-ud-daula formed his plans with the greatest skill. His agents at Delhi won over the Emperor to his side. He despatched trusty men in small numbers and by different roads to Murshidabad with orders to be in readiness for his arrival. He established a secret post between Cuttack and Delhi so that he might receive the farman he expected from the Emperor as expeditiously as possible and also obtain authentic news from Murshidabad. As the rainy season was approaching, when the roads would become impassable, he collected a vast number of boats and boatmen to convey him and his army to Murshidabad. As soon as the news was brought that Murshid Kuli Khan had but a few days to live he left Cuttack. In the neighbourhood of Midnapore he received the Emperor's farman appointing him Governor of Bengal and pushed on for Murshidabad. On his arrival in the city he proceeded at once to Murshid Kuli Khan's hall of audience, caused his patent to be read, ascended the masnad and received the congratulations and customary offerings of the chief men. Sarfaraz Khan was at his country-seat near the city when the sound of the kettledrums and other instruments of music announced to his astonished ears the presence of the new Nawab. His courtiers and military officers whom he summoned in haste were all of the opinion that resistance was useless and recommended him to submit. Accordingly the young man "left his princely retinue behind; and taking only a few servants, he advanced briskly; and whether he would or not, he kissed his father's feet, presented his nuzur, congratulated him on his accession, and dropped every thought of dispute and contention." Such is the account given in the *Seir Mutaquerin*. Another account states that Sarfaraz Khan received more timely notice of his father's approach and marched out of Murshidabad to oppose him but his grandmother, Murshid Kuli Khan's widow, who had great influence over him, induced him to refrain from fighting and submit to his father.⁷⁰

70. *Riyaz-us-salatîn*, p. 268.

According to the *Seir Mutaqherin* Fateh Chand had wished well to Shuja-ud-daula in his efforts to become Nawab. As soon as Shuja-ud-daula ascended the masnad he made Fateh Chand one of his confidential advisers. These are the only clues we have to Fateh Chand's conduct during these events. Obviously if Fateh Chand had openly supported Shuja-ud-daula he would have exposed himself to grave danger but it seems legitimate to conclude that he did not use his influence at Delhi in favour of Sarfaraz Khan and it has been suggested before that this was probably the reason why all Murshid Kuli Khan's efforts on behalf of his grandson failed. The point is of some importance in the light of after events. There was no question of hereditary right involved so that there appears to have been no reason why Fateh Chand should have favoured the father more than the son unless he distrusted the character of the latter and his fitness for the government.

In the astonishing success that had attended all the measures of Shuja-ud-daula we can trace the workmanship of two able men who had already aided their master to obtain a great reputation as Governor of Orissa.⁷¹ These two men—Alivardi Khan and Haji Ahmad—were brothers. Their mother was related to Shuja-ud-daula. Another trusted servant who accompanied Shuja-ud-daula to Murshidabad was Rai Alam Chand. He had been his Diwan in Orissa and though Sarfaraz Khan held the title in Bengal and Alam Chand was nominally Deputy Diwan in reality all the toil and responsibilities of the office fell upon him. These three men and Jagat Seth Fateh Chand were selected by Shuja-ud-daula to form his Council.⁷² They became his chief ministers and advised him on all the measures of his government. A year or two afterwards Alivardi Khan was made Governor of Behar but the remaining three may be looked upon as the real rulers of Bengal until the death of Shuja-ud-daula.

One of the first acts of Shuja-ud-daula as Nawab gave proof of his humanity and love of justice. In the time of Murshid Kuli Khan torture and imprisonment had been the lot of those zamindars who failed in the payment of the revenue that had been assessed on their lands. Shuja-ud-daula found many of them in prison when he became Nawab. Those who were innocent of fraud were at once set free. The rest had to give a written promise that they would make their payments regularly in future. Then they were given robes of honour according to their rank and dismissed to their homes with injunctions to transmit the revenue through the agency of Jagat Seth Fateh Chand.⁷³ Shuja-ud-daula had no reason to regret his clemency. "Over and

71. *Seir Mutaqherin*, Vol. I, pp. 298, 299.

72. *Seir Mutaqherin*, Vol. I, p. 302.

73. *Seir Mutaqherin*, Vol. I, pp. 303, 304. *Riyaz-e-salatia*, p. 289.

above the profits of Jagirs and fees on warehouses and factories, he easily raised one krur and fifty laks of rupees, which he remitted to the Imperial Treasury through the Banking Agency of Jagat Seth Fateh Chand."⁷⁴

5.

During the Government of Shuja-ud-daula a serious dispute arose between the Company and Jagat Seth Fateh Chand. On the 15th April, 1730, John Stackhouse, the Chief of the factory at Cassimbazar, and his Council, informed the President at Calcutta that their broker, Kantu, had absconded and their trade was consequently at a standstill, that it was impossible to remedy matters by making contracts with their merchants direct for their broker owed Jagat Seth a large sum of money and he had persuaded the merchants to refuse to make any agreements with the Company until his debt was paid. Whether their broker returned or not they saw no prospect of carrying on their business unless Fateh Chand was satisfied.⁷⁵

A few days later the broker was induced to return and an examination was made into his accounts. It was found that he owed Jagat Seth and other merchants Rs. 245,000 and was responsible to the Company for Rs. 133,000 besides. To meet these liabilities he placed in the hands of the Company securities and property to the value of Rs. 272,000.⁷⁶

Jagat Seth sent a demand for the money owing to him by Kantu to Stackhouse who desired him "to permit a Company's servant to copy the notes and papers deposited in his hands by Kantu." "Whatever the deposited notes are," replied Jagat Seth, "I lent the money to the Company. When you will promise to discharge them I will produce them." This statement defines the issue from Jagat Seth's point of view. He had lent the money to Kantu as the Company's agent, the money had been applied by Kantu to the Company's business and Jagat Seth looked to the Company to make it good. This was confirmed by Kantu who, on being examined, stated that when he contracted for the whole amount of the Company's investment for the year he had in his possession promissory notes received from sundry persons to the value of Rs. 72,000 only but Fateh Chand had "so much confidence in him that whatever sum he told him a note was for, he let him have the money."⁷⁷ On the other hand the Company's servants argued that when they borrowed money they gave obligations for it under their own hands.

Failing to get satisfaction at Cassimbazar Jagat Seth wrote a letter to the

74. *Riyaz-e-salatîn*, p. 288.

75. Consultation, 29th April, 1730.

76. Consultation, 4th May, 1730.

77. Consultation 25th May, 1730.

President at Calcutta "the purport of which was that Contoo was indebted to him Rs. 215,000, on which affair he had sent his gomastah Jabeendas to John Stackhouse Esqr. Chief of Cossimbuzar, with the account who told the gomastah that Contoo's accounts were made up and sent to Calcutta and he would take care to pay him shortly: but he now observes within these twenty days we have greatly deviated from our usual honour and punctuality; however as we have made up accounts with our gomastah Contoo, he doubts not we are so well versed in mercantile affairs as to see him paid."⁷⁸

Meanwhile Fateh Chand had submitted a proposal to the Chief at Cassimbazar. Let the Company, he said, give him a promissory note for the whole amount of Kantu's effects (Rs. 272,000) and he would immediately advance the Company's proportion, amounting to about Rs. 80,000 to them and also satisfy the other creditors of Kantu. By this arrangement he would lose Rs. 50,000 and to indemnify him against this loss Kantu was to give him a note for that amount. Under no circumstances could the payment of this note be demanded of the Company, but it was to be paid by Kantu himself as soon as he was able to do so. To enable Kantu to do this however, it was essential that he should continue to be the Company's broker and the arrangement would also be profitable to the Company for they could stop the *dasturi*⁷⁹ Kantu received from the merchants until the balance which would still be owing to the Company was paid off. Stackhouse replied that he had no power to agree to Jagat Seth's terms and the Council at Calcutta ignored them.⁸⁰

Jagat Seth now appealed to the Nawab who ordered Haji Ahmad to see that he was paid. Guards were placed on the Company's wakil and when the English sent him to Haji Ahmad to enquire why he proceeded "so roughly on Futtichund's instigation" Haji Ahmed replied "that Futtichund's estate was esteemed as the King's treasure and the Nabob was resolved to see him satisfied" He strongly advised the English to accommodate the matter to prevent an open rupture with the Nawab.⁸¹

A week later the Nawab was very angry with Haji Ahmad because he had failed to get the money, confined the English wakil, and declared that the English must satisfy Fateh Chand's demands out of Kantu's effects which were in their hands. All the arguments the Company's servants could offer were ineffectual "the Mutsuddies alleging he was our servant and as he

78. *Ibid.*

79. *Dasturi* "that which is customary." That commission or percentage on the money passing in any cash transaction which, with or without acknowledgement or permission, sticks to the fingers of the agent of payment." Hobson Jobson, p. 333.

80. Consultation, 2nd June, 1730.

81. *Ibid.*

acknowledges the debt we must be answerable for it and Futtichund says he will stand to the Nabob's determination at all hazards."⁶²

The President and Council met on the 9th June to consider these tidings and resolved "that we write to the Chief and Council of Cossimbazar acquainting them we are willing to come into any reasonable proposals and that if Futtichund will pay or give security for the Honourable Company's proportion, we will deliver Contoo's effects or be accountable for what they produce to him but as Contoo has behaved himself in so vile a manner we cannot in justice to our Hon'ble Employers continue him in a post of so great trust, and at the same time send an Arislast⁶³ to the Nabob and write a letter to Futtichund desiring our business be no longer impeded."⁶⁴

These letters were not sent immediately as the President and Council were reluctant to enter into the quarrel directly. They hoped that their people at Cassimbazar would be able to induce Jagat Seth to take a dividend of Kantu's estate without insisting that Kantu should be retained as the Company's broker. On the 18th June, however, they heard that Jagat Seth's gomastah gave them no hope that his master would agree to this proposal as the dismissal of Kantu would mean the loss of a large sum of money to him. They heard, too, that two substantial merchants to whom the post of broker had been offered in succession had each refused to accept it giving as their reason that it would be impossible to carry on the Company's investment until the dispute with Fateh Chand was accomodated. In addition to this they heard that the Nawab was threatening to put an entire stop to their trade unless they satisfied Jagat Seth and the Company's servants at Dacca reported that the dispute was likely to stop all their business at that place.

The Council met on the 22nd and resolved to send the arzdaat to the Nawab setting forth their grievances and desiring that he would oblige Fateh Chand to take only his proportion of Kantu's effects, that their vakil might be released and that they might be permitted to carry on their business as usual. "We are sensible," the resolution went on to say, "if the Nabob should reject this we shall then be obliged to come to a quarrel and our business be stopped for some time which is the reason we have hitherto avoided it, but finding we have no other way left but this or to comply with Futtichund's demand in continuing Contoo our broker, we have resolved on the first which we take to be the least evil of the two, for should we admit of Contoo's being continued broker, he would always be subject to Futtichund as being greatly indebted to him, and it's very apperent to us that Futtichund must have

62. Consultation 9th June, 1730.

63. A memorial.

64. Consultation 9th June, 1730.

some extraordinary views by being so strenuous in his behalf in which our Hon'ble Masters may be great sufferers in the end, though it is urged by Futtichund's and Contoo's friends that the intent of his design to continue Contoo broker is with a view of paying in time all his creditors with the dustore of one rupee nine annas per cent., he annually receives of the merchants on the investment, to which we answer that the annual dustore which he is to receive cannot at most amount to more than 120,000 rupees, which as he is to be esteemed at the Durbar and the country around as our broker, he is obliged to live up to that character and the numerous family depending upon him will make that amount barely sufficient to defray his expenses so that the hopes given his creditors would be entirely frustrated and our Hon. Masters' affairs still subject to the same inconveniences as before and liable to be stopped on any creditor's complaining so that it appears to us that Futtichund's view of imposing Contoo on us for a broker is to reimburse himself by some methods with the merchants in making us pay dearer for our silk than it may be bought for by others which will be to the disadvantage of our Hon. Masters and our trade in general."⁸⁵

The arzdasht was sent to the Nawab and a letter to Jagat Seth. The latter having read his letter sent it back without answer.⁸⁶ The Nawab's reply to Governor Deane is the earliest extant document, with the exception of the Emperor's farman, in which the title of Jagat Seth is found. It is appended to the Bengal Consultation of the 6th July, 1730, and runs as follows:—

"I have received your Arzdasht by which I understand that when the Company's Agents have occasion to borrow money, they always give obligations under their hands, that your broker Contoo at your factory at Cassimbazar is indebted to several Merchants and that on a complaint made by them to me Peons were put on your Vackeel Russick Loll.

Juggutseet hath set forth that for these twelve years past he has dealt with your factory at Cassimbazar by means of Contoo to the amount of upwards of fifty lak of Rupees and according to the custom of Merchants have (*sic*) always kept regular books by which books it appears there is a ballance due of Rupees 215,000 for which Sum Contoo has made over Rupees 2,72,500 that is owing him by the Company's People; it is well-known to every one that the Europeans are upright and just, now if you are indebted to Juggutseet the aforesaid Sum I would have you pay it without any Demur, but if there is any impediment deliver Contoo up here that the affair may be ended by arbitrators."

85. Consultation, 22nd June, 1730.

86. Consultation, 10th July, 1730.

The English now made strenuous endeavours to win friends among the Nawab's ministers. "A new patron" was sought in the person of the Nawab's son, Sarfaraz Khan, to whom they presented a horse that he had desired for some time and for which he had made an offer of Rs. 900. They reminded Haji Ahmad and Rei Alam Chand of the assurances of friendship they had given the Company and expressed surprise that with such powerful friends they had not found more favour with the Nawab. But the two ministers could give them no hope of support in the present disputes. "The Nawab," they said, "has such a regard for Futtichund that it is out of our power to serve you in opposition to him." All they could do was to advise the English to make up the dispute with Fateh Chand as well as they could.⁸⁷

Meanwhile "two considerable men" of Murshidabad had come forward as mediators and made proposals which, they gave the Company's servants at Cassimbazar reason to hope, would accommodate matters. "Kantu's assets," they said, "are worth Rs. 272,000. Let the Company reserve Rs. 80,000 as their own share, then appoint a new broker and hand over to this broker the remaining Rs. 192,000 to satisfy Fateh Chand and the merchants." In forwarding the proposal to Calcutta the Company's servants at Cassimbazar desired the President and Council to empower them to put an end to their tedious dispute and added "One thing they presume to offer their opinion on—that it will be of very ill consequence if Cantoo's petition is carried to the Durbar."⁸⁸

This petition of Kantu's which was enclosed in the letter from Cassimbazar formed a new complication. Kantu asserted that a former chief of the Cassimbazar factory, Mr. Stephenson, had extorted large sums of money from him and that was the cause of his insolvency. According to Kantu the total amount extorted by Mr. Stephenson amounted to Rs. 175,000 and his banian had Rs. 7,000 besides. "You are my masters," he pleaded, "what I tell you is truth, his two banians Hurrykissen and Suddanand can witness this as well as their books. It is not in six months but in three years I have been undone and being pressed in credit I borrowed this money of Futtichund."⁸⁹ An enquiry was made into the matter which after languishing for some time was dropped and no definite pronouncement appears to have been made by the Company on Kantu's assertions. They were probably correct.

On the 21st July the Council met and decided to reject the proposals of the mediators. They argued that Kantu's estate amounted to no more than Rs. 272,000, therefore, as Kantu's debt to them was Rs. 133,000 a loss of Rs. 53,000 would arise if the Company advanced Rs. 192,000. Besides this ar-

87. Consultation, 13th July, 1730.

88. Consultation, 20th July, 1730.

89. Ibid.

arrangement assumed that Kantu's effects would produce the sum they were valued at whereas "on a very moderate calculation" a loss of Rs. 50,000 should be allowed "on his balances at the aurungs and adventures abroad." Therefore the proposal "would give Contoo's whole estate to Futtichund and leave the Company and the other merchants to whom Contoo is indebted quite in the lurch."⁹⁰ As the Company's servants at Cassimbazar pointed out, the Council had misunderstood the proposal. The person to be appointed as broker was to satisfy both Fateh Chand and the other merchants with Rs. 192,000 and Rs. 80,000 in full was reserved for the Company. It was true that the Council would have to run the risk that Kantu's assets might not be realised in full but they had Kantu's positive assurances that his effects could not bring in less than they had been valued at.

Meanwhile all parties at Murshidabad and Cassimbazar were anxiously awaiting the Company's decision. The Company's servants at the latter place despatched another letter on the 24th urging the Council to come to some resolution concerning the dispute. Their affairs were in an extremely unsettled state, none of the Nawab's officers would espouse their cause, after much persuasion their merchants had agreed to take bullion in payment of their customary advances but the sale of this bullion had been immediately stopped by Fateh Chand, Fateh Chand himself was "also very uneasy to hear the result of your determination," Haji Alinad was demanding from them every day a reply to the Nawab's letter and the Nawab was full of anger at the delay and was threatening them with his revenge if they refused to satisfy Fateh Chand.⁹¹

With the arrival of the Council's decision the quarrel assumed a more acute form. On the 5th August the Chief and Council at Cassimbazar reported:— "They have advised Futtichund that the mediators' proposals had been rejected and that the terms formerly proposed were the only means left to satisfy him to which he replied in passion that he wanted not power to recover his whole debt and that we should feel the effects of his resentment." For a time, however, he had no heart to pursue the quarrel. "Futtichund keeps his house," proceeds the letter from Cassimbazar, "on account of his son's death. In three or four days he will appear abroad when should he persist in his unjust demand and the Government espouse his cause they desire to know if they shall put our former orders in execution of withdrawing their factory."⁹²

But before taking this extreme measure the English made further attempts to end the dispute. The President had replied to the Nawab's letter with the only result, as they heard on the 14th August, that the Nawab insisted on Fateh

⁹⁰ Consultation, 21st July, 1730.

⁹¹ Consultations, 28th July, 1st August, 1730.

⁹² Consultation, 10th August, 1730.

Chand receiving satisfaction "esteeming his money the King's" ⁹³ and threatened to stop their Patna fleet. On the 21st the Chief and Council at Cassimbazar resolved "to send for the merchants and advise them to go in a body to Futtichund and endeavour to persuade him to take his proportion of Contoo's effects, otherwise we shall quit our factory, they will also order the Duhoy to be given and the Nabob informed of their resolution and if they receive an unsatisfactory answer they shall make the best of their way to Calcutta leaving the factory to the charge of Harrykissen their warehouse banian. They heartily wish this proceeding may bring Futtichund to reason but if it fails they lament their misfortune in finding all their endeavours to accommodate this unhappy affair frustrated."⁹⁴ This attempt was fruitless, and when an application made on the 22nd to the Diwan Raj Alam Chand, Haji Ahmad and Jagat Seth received an unsatisfactory answer the English left the factory.⁹⁵

Just before they left the Nawab sent for the English wakil "and asked him why they wanted to go away who told him the reasons for it, to which the Nawab replied: Futtichund must be satisfied, but if they continued a resolution so contrary to their interests, they might go if they pleased and he with them, so ordered the vackeel to be released."⁹⁶

On the 23rd the Company's servants arrived at Cuddalore. Here they were visited by Coja Owan, "a noted Armenian," who desired them to wait at Cuddalore while he went to Fateh Chand and tried to bring about a settlement. They asked the Council to give them discretionary power to make up the affair and decided to wait for the Council's answer in order "to prevent, if possible, the ill consequences that according to their opinion will inevitably attend their going down to Calcutta for as we are assured by everybody if resentment is carried so far the Government will come to no terms and they need not say how much our Hon. Masters' interests will be prejudiced thereby." The Council, however, met on the 25th and determined to stand by their former resolution.⁹⁷

On the 26th Mr. Halsey, one of the Company's servants at Cassimbazar, arrived in Calcutta bringing fresh proposals and on the 8th September John Stackhouse, the chief of the Cassimbazar factory, followed but whether accompanied by the rest of the English merchants is uncertain. That the Company decided to offer new terms to Jagat Seth was probably due to his representations. On the 9th the Council met and agreed "that Mr. John Stackhouse etc. Gentlemen do get themselves ready to return to Cassimbazar and that they en-

93. Consultation, 17th August, 1730.

94. Consultation, 24th August 1730.

95. Consultation, 25th August, 1730.

96. *Ibid.*

97. *Ibid.*

deavour to carry on the Investment to the best of their power and in order to satisfy Futtichund they are ordered to offer him one hundred seven thousand five hundred rupees four annas being eight annas per rupee on his debt according to the most just calculation we can make of what Contoo's effects will produce, Agreed further that Contoo be displaced and that Burradutt, a substantial merchant at Cassimbazar who is proposed by Mr. Stackhouse be appointed broker in his room since the Company's affairs cannot be carried on without having a person to act in that station.⁹⁸

Before the end of September John Stackhouse and his party were back at Cassimbazar. Jagat Seth Fateh Chand seems to have held scornfully aloof and made no demand upon them for his money and so the Company's servants decided not to mention the offer they were authorised to make to him until they received directions from the Council to do so.⁹⁹ Much to their surprise, however, Burradutt declined to be their broker and when, on the 3rd October, they sent the English vakil to the Durbar to make representations on the subject of the Ostenders they were told by Haji Ahmad that the matter could not be discussed till Fateh Chand was satisfied.¹⁰⁰

Negotiations were then entered upon with Fateh Chand and on the 22nd October the Chief and Council at Cassimbazar reported that "they had finished the affair with Futtichund for one hundred and thirty thousand rupees which they hope will be agreeable and that the affair might be managed to the Hon'ble Company's credit it was ended by a visit from Futtichund who promised to befriend them on all occasions and for the present has undertaken to procure them admission to the Nabob and an order for the general currency of our business."¹⁰¹

Before this Jagat Seth had returned the promissory notes Kanta had deposited in his hands and also given the Company an acquittance, a translation of which was appended to the Consultation of the 28th October, 1730, and runs as follows:—

"I Juggutseat do hereby declare that all Accounts between me and Contoo the English Broker at Cossimbazar are accomplished and fully discharged by Mr. John Stackhouse Chief &cn Council at that Factory so that I have no further demands on the English Company or Contoo their Broker This being their discharge.

Dated 20th October, 1730."

Fateh Chand carried out his promise at least in part. On the 6th Novem-

98. Consultation, 9th September, 1730.

99. Consultation, 5th October, 1730.

100. Consultation, 8th October, 1730.

101. Consultation, 28th October, 1730.

ber he introduced Messrs. Stackhouse and Russell to the Nawab " who received them with great civility and assured them of his favour to the English on all occasions." 102

It is difficult to blame either of the parties to this quarrel. On the one hand Jagat Seth was convinced that in dealing with Kantu he was dealing with the Company and so great was his confidence in the Company that in his transactions with Kantu he even neglected the ordinary precautions of his profession. On the other hand it was impossible for Governor Deane to accept responsibility for money borrowed without his express authority. Whether it was wise of Governor Deane to reject the proposal of the mediators is more doubtful. He knew the power of Jagat Seth at Murshidabad, he was aware of the services the banker had already rendered the Company in the disputes that had arisen with the Nawab, he had only to turn back a few years to find recorded in the minutes of the meetings of his Council the hope of the Company's servants at Cassimbazar that he would take care that Jagat Seth did not suffer for his efforts on the Company's behalf and it must have been obvious to him that, in refusing to agree with his adversary quickly and carrying on the quarrel relentlessly to the bitter end, he was inflicting a severe loss on Jagat Seth which would rankle in his mind and alienate him from the Company. If Governor Deane congratulated himself on getting out of the business cheaply he was to find that, in reality, he had made a bargain which was to cost the Company dear and end in bitter mortification to himself. Jagat Seth had for the present acquiesced in his loss, but after events showed that he was determined that the Company should make it good when a favourable opportunity arose and the opportunity presented itself with startling rapidity. During the course of the quarrel Jagat Seth had been pressing in his demands on the Dacca factory for the money owing to him there and the Company's servants at Dacca had been obliged to draw a bill of exchange on the President and Council at Calcutta to settle the account. The following extract from the Cash Account for January 1731 records the payment of this bill:—

By Dacca Factory paid Futtichund Anunchund a Bill of Exchange drawn by the Chief and Council there	...	...	30,000
Batta 14"6"5 p.c.	...	...	4,320
			<hr/>
			34,320

Later in the same year there is evidence of the altered relations between Jagat Seth and the Company. On the 13th May the Chief and Council at

Cassimbazar were in want of money and compelled to write to Calcutta for a supply "Futtichund not caring to lend any."¹⁰³

In September Governor Deane was to find how unwise he had been in alienating Jagat Seth and how useless the Company's "new patron," Sarfaraz Khan, was in comparison with him. On the 21st the Company's servants at Cassimbazar reported that "a very unlucky accident had happened which they were afraid would give them much trouble." A party of men conducting boats laden with goods to Calcutta had quarrelled with the guards at the chanki of Barrigann on the Malda river, killed two of them and wounded a third. One dead body was brought to Murshidabad "and laid at the Nabob's door." The Nawab sent for the English wakil and in a violent passion told him "that if the English were permitted to act in such a manner and kill the King's subject at their pleasure he could not be easy in his Government." All endeavours to pacify him were fruitless and the English at Cassimbazar feared that the affair would involve them in considerable expense.¹⁰⁴

Within a fortnight the dispute had developed into a general attack on the Company. The Company's servants were charged with abusing the privileges they enjoyed under the farman of the Emperor Farruksiyar. It was alleged that their Indian merchants were not content with providing goods ordered by the English but traded largely on their own account under permits obtained from the Company. The Company, besides, had not applied to the reigning Emperor for a confirmation of their farman nor had they made him a present. Therefore, declared the Nawab, they would have to pay customs on all their trade from the beginning of the Emperor's reign and he had received an order from the Emperor to that effect.¹⁰⁵

While the English were endeavouring to get a petition presented to the Nawab by means of Sarfaraz Khan another unfortunate accident occurred at Murcha. A sergeant and two soldiers in charge of boats quarrelled with the guard at that place with the result that one sepoy was wounded while the sergeant was killed and his two soldiers, one severely wounded, were made prisoners. The sergeant's head was cut off and sent to Murshidabad and the two men were also sent there in chains.¹⁰⁶

On the 20th October the Chief and Council at Cassimbazar reported that in spite of all their efforts to find out some means of accommodating the dispute the officers at the Durbar were daily devising new measures to molest them, their wakil was refused admittance to the Nawab and when that servant of

103. Consultation, 24th May, 1731.

104. Consultation, 27th September, 1731.

105. Consultation, 11th October, 1731.

106. Consultation, 13th October, 1731.

the Company enquired of Haji Ahmad if a handsome present would procure him an interview Haji Ahmad "replied very shortly the order from Court was of too great consequence to be dispensed with for a trifle."

"They are well assured from several persons," the letter from Cassimbazar continued, "that Futtichund is at the bottom of this affair and they have too much reason to think that it cannot be made up without his concurrence. Two days since they sent a message to him, desiring to know if he would be once more their friend and undertake their cause, he coldly answered he would not be their enemy and at last said they might send a trusty servant to him, whom he would introduce to the Duan and chief mutsuddys but he could not speak directly to the Nabob in our behalf having engaged to the contrary. In short they are given to understand that Futtichund expects to be reimbursed for the loss he sustained by Contoo, though he will not ask it, till when he will on every occasion be a stickler against us, but if they satisfy him in that they may be assured of a staunch and powerful friend. This cannot be done without a very great expense but they believe there is no cheaper way left to accommodate matters and they are of an opinion, if they intend to prevent an absolute rupture with the Government that the only safe method will be by Futtichund's means and if they do not secure his friendship, whatever they spend at the Darbar will not secure them from fresh insults."

The President and Council were loth to admit that the fruits of the hard bargain they had driven with Fateh Chand had been brought home to them in this startling fashion and it was only step by step that the truth was forced upon them "Give Fateh Chand hopes of making up his loss by Kantu," they wrote to Cassimbazar on the 23rd October, "and endeavour by that means to get him to accommodate the affair entirely, but do not offer anything till we know whether we can possibly consent to the demand."¹⁰⁷

Before this letter reached Cassimbazar the Council received another letter from thence to the effect that the Nawab expected a present of a lac of rupees for the Emperor "besides something for himself" and that if this were refused he would insist on the order from Court being carried out. Then the Council went a stage further and on the 25th October directed their servants at Cassimbazar "to tell Futtichund that they have a power to treat with him and so to know from him the certain demand for finishing this affair and while they are negotiating to acquaint us what it is with all expedition, but to conclude nothing without further orders."¹⁰⁸

On the 29th the Council received a reply to their letter of the 23rd in which the Company's servants at Cassimbazar stated "they have sent a message to

¹⁰⁷ Consultation, 23rd October, 1731.

¹⁰⁸ Consultation, 25th October, 1731.

Futtichund desiring him very pressingly to let them know what sum would be sufficient to accommodate our dispute and giving him hopes of satisfaction for himself in case he will be our staunch friend to which he replied—that whenever they shall be empowered to treat he will use all his interest with the Nabob to make up the affair as much in our favour as possible, but till then he shall not be able to do anything, so that they are still in the same uncertainty they were before and they are well assured that every day's delay will widen the breach as well as retard getting in the investment. So they hope we will immediately come to some resolution."

The Council met on the 30th and resolved to permit John Stackhouse at Cassimbazar to offer Rs. 40,000 to the Nawab and Rs. 5,000 to his Diwan for the confirmation of their privileges. If more were peremptorily insisted on he might increase the offer by five or ten thousand rupees but go no farther. As for the order from Court they believed it to be fictitious but should they be obliged to give something to the Emperor Stackhouse was to insist on a confirmation of all their grants under the royal seal.¹⁰⁹

On the following day more serious news came from Cassimbazar. The English there had made daily applications to Jagat Seth and, as directed, given him hopes of satisfaction for himself if he would undertake their cause "but he has always given them the same answer as at first." Jagat Seth's chief servant, Rupeband, however, had informed them that his master would never heartily espouse their interest till they gave him an obligation for Rs. 50,000 to be paid when the dispute had been accommodated. "Delays will be of the utmost ill-consequence," the Council were warned, "if we intend to prevent a war for the Nabob is already greatly irritated and begins to threaten that since the English are so stout he will try their courage." Finally the Council were urged to take into their serious consideration whether it would not be better to make up the dispute at once, even at a great expense, than run the risk of being brought to a shameful compliance in the end which would be the inevitable consequence "for the Nabob is very rash and haaty (far Unlike Jafferewnn) not at all regarding what he does to obtain his ends let the country suffer ever so much by it."

On the 1st November another letter arrived from Cassimbazar in which the Company's servants there stated that "they had an answer from Futtichund who far from complying with their request grows angry and says they only dally with him to no purpose, that we are not disputing for a trifle but the security of our Phirmand which the Nabob is about to deprive us of, and advising against further delays." The only way out was to invest them with

¹⁰⁹. Consultation, 30th October, 1731.

power to finish the affair. All the hopes they had placed in Sarfaraz-Khan had been disappointed as they found he stood in awe of his father.

Thereupon the President and Council gave way entirely and agreed "that we write the gentlemen at Cassimbazar to make as cheap a bargain as they can with Futtichund but whatever they give him must be as an acknowledgment of his good service in this affair and not as payment of any demand or debt."¹¹⁰

On receipt of this order, Mr. Halsey, one of the factors at Cassimbazar, paid two visits to Jagat Seth. "The first time little could be drawn from him but at the next visit, which was last night, he opened his mind more freely and said that matters being carried so far they must not flatter themselves with hopes of getting over this affair immediately because it is actually represented at Court, and that the Nabob has it not in his power to confirm our privileges if they would give him ever so much money. Wherefore he advised them as a friend that the best method they can take will be to endeavour to get all the guards removed and our people and goods cleared by giving a present to the Nabob which will also probably engage him to write to Court in our favour and afterwards to treat with him for a new Phirmaund which Futtichund said will be absolutely necessary for the future currency of our business and as for himself they may depend on all his assistance." The Company's servants at Cassimbazar, however, informed the Council that the sum necessary to conclude the affair would far exceed that which they had been empowered by them to offer. The Council met on the 8th November and agreed "we find ourselves under an absolute necessity to give them full power to make it up on the best terms they can."¹¹¹

With the assistance of Patch Chand the English at Cassimbazar ascertained that the Nawab's terms were a lakh of rupees for the Emperor and another lakh for the Nawab. On payment of these sums the Nawab would permit their business to go on as usual and would represent their case to the Emperor in a favourable manner. "The sum demanded is very extravagant," wrote the merchants at Cassimbazar, "but considering the answers they have hitherto received from the Nabob and his Duan tending to nothing else than our punctual compliance with the King's orders or paying something equivalent (which would not be less than seven or eight lauck of rupees) they intend to agree to it being persuaded they shall not be able to procure better terms nor should they have had this offer but by Futtichund's means."

On the 18th October the Chief and Council at Cassimbazar related how the dispute was finally settled. "To their great surprise," they said, "a new difficulty was started by the Duan Allumchand, who insisted on them signing an

¹¹⁰. Consultation, 1st November, 1731.

¹¹¹. Consultation 8th November, 1733.

obligation to limit the number of the ships and many other articles which if they had agreed to would have been in effect giving up almost all our privileges. So they were obliged to apply to Futtichund, who by his interest with the Duan and other Mutsuddys prevailed with them to drop most of their demands and sent a paper to them (the English) which he said they must agree to that the Nabob might have something to write to the King in his own vindication for clearing our business. However they refused it, till he assured them that if they would not comply our affairs would be embroiled more than ever so seeing no other remedy left they at last consented.

" They send us a copy of the paper, which they sealed yesterday, in the presence of Futtichund who brought it to them himself by the Nabob's order, with Perwannas for taking off the guards and at the delivery of them he desired us not to be uneasy for that our Hon'ble Masters' affairs would go on again as usual and nothing more by this was required than that we should not trade in Bengal salt, beetlenut, and other commodities from one part of the country to another and engross any sort of goods to the prejudice of the King's subjects. He further told them they may depend on his best service in future, in which they believe he is since having now no demand upon them for old scores. They gave him a note for fifty thousand rupees for his good services according to our orders with which he seemed entirely satisfied. He has been of signal use in the accommodation of this dispute for instead of two laack of rupees they before advised of, he has finished it for one hundred and eighty thousand including the Duan's and officers' presents which amount to no less than thirty thousand so he has saved for them what they have given him."¹¹²

During the remaining years of the government of Shuja-ud-daula the English relied on the good services of Jagat Seth in times of difficulty. On the 30th April, 1733, a letter from Cassimbazar relates that the English vakil "waited on Juggutsent (the first recorded instance of the use of the title by the Company's servants) in connection with the affairs of the Company who, after hearing what the vakil had to say, went" in to the Nabob."¹¹³ In July of the same year one of the Company's servants at Cassimbazar carried an arzdest from the President to Jagat Seth in order either to request him to deliver it to the Nawab "or to pursue such other means of doing it as he should advise them."¹¹⁴ In January, 1735, when their broker was seized the English immediately despatched their vakil with letters to Rai Alam Chund, Haji Ahmad and Fateh Chand "remonstrating and desiring their assistance in our behalf."¹¹⁵ In November,

¹¹² Consultation, 22nd November, 1731.

¹¹³ Consultation, 7th May, 1733.

¹¹⁴ Consultation, 23rd July, 1733.

¹¹⁵ Consultation, 22nd January, 1734-35.

1735, when Shuja-ud-daula followed the example of Murshid Kuli Khan and demanded a large sum of money as rent for the Calcutta settlement the aid of Jagat Seth was sought to accommodate the matter. The conclusion of this dispute was marked by a visit to the factory at Cassimbazar by Jagat Seth in the course of which "he was not wanting in his great professions for the interest of our Hon'ble Masters nor we in an occasional ¹¹⁶ and suitable address to so great a man." The payment of Rs. 40,000 which ended the dispute was made to the Nawab through Jagat Seth and the Nawab's perwannas were brought to the factory by Jagat Seth himself.¹¹⁷

It was during these years that a relation of Fateh Chand appeared at Murshidabad. This was Lalji, the son of Sadanand, who was a brother of Manik Chand. Kwajah Sarhad, who had figured prominently in the Surman embassy, had been promised, presumably in writing, a gratuity by the English if the embassy were successful in obtaining a farman from the Emperor and on this security he had borrowed a large sum of money from Sadanand. About the year 1734 Kwajah Sarhad died and Lalji obtained a letter from Court directing the Nawab to see that the debt was paid by the English. Fateh Chand naturally supported his cousin and so, too, did Haji Ahmad who was "glad of an opportunity to oblige Futtichund." The English held out for some time against the demand on the ground that Kwajah Sarhad had died greatly in debt to the Company but they were obliged to confess that the Armenian was to have had the gratuity promised him and directed Mr. Braddyll, the chief of the Cassimbazar factory, and his Council, "to compound this matter with Futtichund on the best terms they can, taking care that it does not appear to be given as his (Lalji's) due, but that we give this money purely to oblige Futtichund." On receipt of these orders the English at Cassimbazar sent their vakil "to sound Futtichund's intentions in relation to Logeesaw (Lalji saho) and to try what would satisfy him without making the first offer on their parts and to let him know whatever sum was given on this occasion was to please him and that we by no means allowed of Logeesaw's demand to be just." The vakil had two conferences with Fateh Chand at the second of which Lalji was present. "Logeesaw said the whole was his due but that he was willing to abate two or three thousand rupees upon which Futtichund told him that the English would not have stood out so long for so trifling a sum and desired him to propose something more reasonable. Logeesaw at length with great difficulty agreed to accept of fifteen thousand rupees and quitted the room when Futtichund advised the vakil to be easy for two or three days, so that they are in hopes it will be accommodated for less." A few days afterwards Fateh Chand sent for the vakil and

¹¹⁶ "Appropriate to the occasion."

¹¹⁷ Consultation, 21st June, 1735.

acquainted him that he had reduced Lalji's demand to Rs. 10,000 and advised him at the same time to finish the affair promising to procure a full discharge from Lalji for his claim upon the Company. So the English at Cassimbazar wrote "it appearing to them that it will be impossible to make any further reduction they thought proper to direct the vacqueel to finish the affair which will cost in all about twelve thousand rupees, that is, ten thousand to Lolgeesaw and two thousand to some of his friends whom we are under an absolute necessity to oblige for their interest on this occasion."¹¹⁸

During the government of Shuja-ud-daula the English continued to complain that Fateh Chand would suffer no one to buy silver but himself and that he fixed the price of silver and rupees as he thought proper. In 1736 an order was issued by the Government reducing the value of Madras and Arcot rupees which the English and French used in their transactions with Indian merchants and Fateh Chand was regarded as "the chief promoter of this order."¹¹⁹ It seems that the revenues of the Murshidabad mint had fallen off greatly at this time and, according to Fateh Chand, this was owing to the fact that the English were importing less bullion than formerly and sending more of what they did import to Patna. Therefore he seems to have argued:—Discourage the use of foreign money and the result will be that the European nations will import more bullion to be coined into Murshidabad rupees and the mint will flourish again.

It is certainly true that the English at Cassimbazar reported to the Council at Calcutta that the best method of inducing Fateh Chand to support them in the efforts they were making to get the order rescinded was to sell him a quantity of bullion. Fifty chests of treasure were, accordingly, sent to Cassimbazar and on the 28th December, 1736, the English at Cassimbazar wrote "they sent the vacqueel to offer Futtichund the silver they had then received and at the same time to intercede with him for his interest to get the great loss of batta on Madras rupees taken off, who replied as follows; he could not at present take our silver but desired we would keep it a little while in the factory and he would let us know when it suited his conveniency. As to the batta of Madras rupees he said it was not a proper time to apply to the Nawab to have it taken off immediately but he hoped to effect it in a month and withal sent them word not to be uneasy for that if in the interim they should have occasions for four or five lack of rupees for the Company's use he would advance it for a month or two without interest."

The English merchants at Cassimbazar found out later that twelve of the

¹¹⁸ Consultations, 10th August, 1734; 25th February, 1737; 10th March, 1737; 16th April, 1737.

¹¹⁹ Consultation, 13th December, 1736.

chests were filled with Madras rupees and as they had represented to Fateh Chand that they were all full of bullion this caused them some anxiety for they wrote "though he (Fateh Chand) seems inclinable at present to be our friend they are apprehensive should he find them short in the quantity of silver it may make him think they have imposed upon him and of course disgust him, which as affairs now stand may be attended with ill consequence and they must request us to send as much bullion as will make up the full quantity." The Council at Calcutta had no more bullion but sent to Madras for a supply¹²⁰ and in April 1737 twelve more chests arrived at Cassimbazar. Meanwhile in February the bullion at Cassimbazar had been sold to Fateh Chand "who allowed 206½ for 240 sicca weight the new Pillar Dollars and the Mexico at 206¼."¹²¹

In May 1737 the Company sold 23 chests of treasure to Fateh Chand¹²² but later in the year there was again "no appearance of business in the Mint."¹²³ The decrease in the revenue was so serious that the Diwan Rai Alam Chand was looking into the matter. He called the English vakil to him in private and asked him to procure a return of the amount of bullion imported by the English in the last years of the government of Murshid Kuli Khan and also during the period 1733 to 1736 and the amount of this that had been sent to Patna. The vakil tried to evade the request and, finding this unsuccessful, urged the danger of offending Fateh Chand. Rai Alam Chand replied that he would take care the English received no injury and would convince Fateh Chand that they were forced to comply with his request. "Futtichund likewise met the Vaqueel and told him, he knew the necessity we were under of obliging Allumchund and advised him by all means to do it."¹²⁴ The accounts were sent in September and the Diwan seemed well pleased with them.

Some of these incidents would lead one to suspect that an intrigue was going on behind the scenes aimed at Fateh Chand's monopoly of the mint. As far back as April when the English vakil went to see Fateh Chand in connection with Lalji's affair and took the opportunity of mentioning the loss the English were suffering from the order relating to Madras rupees "Futtichund told him, that it affected himself as much as anybody and that the order was originally levelled at him by the means of Chainray. Allumchund's Diwan (?) who represented there was a great deficiency in the revenue of the Mint occasioned by the want of bullion to coin and that he (Futtichund) had made several attempts to get the order revoked but in vain, that it must be a work of time and it would

120. Consultation, 1st January, 1736-37.

121. Consultation, 7th February, 1736-37.

122. 30th May, 1737.

123. Consultation, 26th September, 1737.

124. Consultation, 29th August, 1737.

be our best way not to stir in it."¹²⁵ Perhaps the clue to the puzzle is to be found in the fact that at the end of the year the French had succeeded in obtaining a promise of a sanad for the use of the mint at a cost of Rs. 50,000 and by so doing had incurred the bitter enmity of Jagat Seth.¹²⁶

All through 1737 the English were trying to get the order removed but so far were they from obtaining any success that a duty was imposed on all Madras and Arcot rupees coming into Bengal. They considered the French responsible for the issue of this order as they had been importing a large quantity of Arcot rupees into Bengal. Their utmost endeavour," the Chief and Council at Cassimbazar wrote in October, "have not been wanting to get the order for laying an additional batta on Madras rupees suppressed, being sensible how great an encroachment it is on our Honble Masters' phirmaund, but that order Arcot rupees into Bengal. "Their utmost endeavour," the Chief and Council my) it seems impracticable to do anything in the affair till they have accommodated their disputes in regard to the Arcot rupees they have imported on all of which the Government demand custom to be immediately paid notwithstanding they are coined in one of the King's mints."¹²⁷ The French cleared their rupees of customs in December and in the same month obtained a promise of a sanad for coming their Arcot rupees at Murshidabad mint as has been already stated.

Meanwhile in September 1737 the Indian merchants trading with the English had complained that Jagat Seth would take Murshidabad siccas only in payment of the money they had borrowed from him or if they repaid their loans in other kinds of rupees they were accepted at a heavy discount with a consequent proportionate loss to them¹²⁸ and so when the English informed them in March 1738 that they expected them to take a part of the sum due to them in Madras rupees the merchants objected stating that "they should be great sufferers in it for the Government would oblige them to pay a duty of two and a half per cent. and they should be at a further loss in putting them off." "Upon this," wrote the Chief and Council at Cassimbazar, "we directed the broker to wait on Futtichund and acquaint him with this hardship and to solicit his interest for the currency of them again. He told the broker the French had been the sole occasion of our complaint by agreeing to pay a custom on Madras and Arcot rupees, that it was not in his power to be of any service to us he himself not being exempted from this custom but that he was willing to take them at the rate of 106½ Madras rupees for 100 siccas which was half per cent. more than we

125. Consultation, 16th April, 1737.

126. Consultation, 29th December, 1737.

127. Consultation, 11th October, 1737.

128. Consultation, 26th September, 1737.

could put them off for anywhere else." Even then the English would have incurred a loss and so the Madras rupees were returned to Calcutta.¹²⁹

Thereupon the President wrote an arzdaat to the Nawab declaring that the hindrance placed on the currency of their Madras rupees was an infringement of one of the principal articles of the farman granted by the Emperor Farrukhsiyar.¹³⁰ The arzdaat was sent to Cassimbazar to be delivered to the Nawab but the Company's servants at that place, before delivering it, thought it necessary to sound Rai Alam Chand and Fateh Chand on the matter.¹³¹ Fateh Chand promised his assistance but was doubtful whether the arzdaat would do any good.¹³² This proved true for when it was delivered to the Nawab through Fateh Chand and Rai Alam Chand the Chief and Council at Cassimbazar reported on the 19th April 1738 "the answer is our request cannot be granted, the duty on foreign rupees having been ordered from Court on account of the great deficiencies in the revenues of the mint and that it affected all the merchants in the country in common with us."¹³³

The records contain several references to commercial transactions between the Company and Jagat Seth during the government of Shuja-ud-daula. On the 22nd May 1732 the Council resolved to procure a letter of credit for Rs. 150,000 on Jagat Seth's factory at Patna for the benefit of their servants there.¹³⁴ On the 15th December 1732 the English at Cassimbazar were ordered to give Jagat Seth the preference when they borrowed money in future and these orders were repeated in 1736.¹³⁵ On the 3rd March the Company's servants at Cassimbazar wrote that "They have taken up two hundred thousand rupees of Futtichund to carry on their business and shall give him the preference as we direct by borrowing what more they shall have occasion for of him."¹³⁶ On the 14th June the Council received a letter from Cassimbazar "inclosing a Bill of Exchange of Futtichund for two hundred and forty thousand siccas which is accepted" and on the 2nd March, 1738, the Company's servants at Cassimbazar borrowed Rs. 150,000.¹³⁷ On the 16th November 1738 a transaction of a different nature is recorded. "Futtichund by his Gomastah desires we will let him have sixty six pieces of red broadcloth and sixty six pieces of green ditto and we not having sufficient in the warehouse of ye popinjay.

129. Consultation, 2nd March, 1737-38.

130. Consultation, 7th March, 1737-38.

131. Consultation, 3rd April, 1738.

132. 13th April, 1738.

133. 15th May, 1738.

134. Consultation, 22nd May, 1732.

135. Consultations, 15th December, 1732; 24th July, 1736.

136. Consultation, 10th March, 1737.

137. Consultation, 2nd March, 1737-38.

"Agreed that we write to the gentlemen at Patna to deliver to his Gomastah there seven bales of the green broadcloth and to debit Account Current Calcutta for the same at fifty rupees per piece he being to account with us for the amount."¹³⁸ The Company's servants at Patna declared that Jagat Seth's gomastah trifled with them until the broadcloth had been disposed of to better advantage elsewhere.¹³⁹ "They are sorry," they wrote on the 27th February 1739, "Futtichund was disappointed in the broad-cloth but it was entirely his gomastah's fault and as affairs stand perhaps Futtichund may not be displeased at it."¹⁴⁰ This is perhaps an allusion to the last illness of the Nawab whose death was reported to the Council at Calcutta in a letter from Cassimbazar dated the 13th March, 1739.¹⁴¹

Shuja-ud-daula was Nawab of Bengal for about twelve years. On his deathbed he recognised his son, Sarfaraz Khan, as his successor, earnestly exhorting to place his confidence in Haji Ahmad, the Rai Ratan Alam Chand and Jagat Seth Fateh Chand as he himself had done.¹⁴²

Without presenting Shuja-ud-daula as a faultless character historians agree in praising him for his benignity of temper, his liberality, and impartial distribution of justice. He was no respecter of persons, "the fearful sparrow certain of finding in his bosom a shelter against the hawk's pursuit, flew towards him with a perfect reliance on his goodness."¹⁴³ In the midst of Mahratta invasions and the convulsions which followed men looked back to his time as a golden age when Bengal really merited the title of "Paradise of Provinces" which it had received in former times. But it is equally true that Nawab Shuja-ud-daula was fond of ease and pleasure. It was upon his Council rather than upon him that the real burden of the government lay¹⁴⁴ and the testimony of historians to the general prosperity of the province is also a testimony to the merits and abilities of Haji Ahmad, the Rai Ratan Alam Chand and Jagat Seth Fateh Chand.

6.

Sarfaraz Khan became Nawab without opposition at the beginning of

138. Consultation, 16th November, 1738.

139. Consultation, 12th February, 1738-39.

140. Consultation, 12th March, 1738-39.

141. Consultation, 19th March, 1738-39.

142. *Riyaz-us-salat*, p. 307.

143. *Seir Mutaqherin*, Vol. I, p. 349.

144. "Being fond of ease and pleasure, Nawab Shuja-ud-daula entrusted the duties of the Nizamut to a Council, composed of Haji Ahmad, Rai Alamchand Diwan and Jagat Seth Fateh Chand, whilst the Nawab himself indulged in pleasures." *Riyaz-us-salat*, p. 291. "Dijagat seet . . . Haji Ahmad . . . who with the Ray Ratan had had the absolute direction of affairs in the late administration." . . . *Seir Mutaqherin*, Vol. I, p. 353. "All occurrences disagreeable to this Nabob being kept very secret." *Bengal Consultations*, 2nd October, 1737.

March, 1739 and, paying heed to the last injunction of his father, chose as his chief ministers Haji Ahmad, the Rai Raian Alam Chand and Jagat Seth Fateh-Chand—the three men to whom had been entrusted the absolute administration of affairs under the late government.

Dark days had descended upon the Mughal Empire. Nadir Shah, the Persian King, had sacked Delhi and the Emperor was his captive. Before the end of March Sarfaraz Khan received orders from Delhi to proclaim Nadir Shah Emperor at Murshidabad, to coin rupees in his name, and to keep the province quiet until the receipt of further orders.¹⁴⁵

So the first rupees of Sarfaraz Khan were coined with the name of Nadir Shah inscribed upon them as the reigning Emperor. Under ordinary circumstances these rupees would have been superior in value to any passing current in Bengal but in these unsettled times the Nadir Shah rupees at once fell to the level of Arcot rupees which were inferior in value to Madras rupees. Men who had them were anxious to get rid of them and so when the English merchants at Cassimbazar went to Fateh Chand for money he refused to lend any unless they would take Nadir Shah rupees whereupon the Council at Calcutta directed them to borrow elsewhere. "We cannot think it proper," they wrote, "to take Sha Nadar's Siceas at the rate Futtichund offers them the loss being so very considerable."¹⁴⁶

When, at the end of May, tidings came to Murshidabad that the Persian King had left Delhi and was returning to his own country the Government ordered the Nadir Shah scale to be broken and new ones to be made in the name of the old Emperor, Muhammad Shah.¹⁴⁷ Jagat Seth, however, does not appear to have got rid of all his Nadir Shah rupees at the end of July for on the 30th, when the Council wished to send bills of exchange for 10,000 sicca rupees to Dacca and applied to Jagat Seth's gomastah in Calcutta for the money, the gomastah informed the Council that he could not give them bills for the new siceas of Muhammad Shah without particular orders from his principals at Murshidabad. The gomastah wrote to Murshidabad and a favourable answer was received from thence for we find in the records under date the 3rd August that "Futtichund's gomastah laid before the Board a Bill of Exchange on his house at Dacca for one hundred thousand sicca rupees of the twenty second year dated the 1st instant and payable twenty one days after date to the Chief & Co Council there. Agreed that we immediately inclose it to the Gentlemen at Dacca for the supply of their factory and that we give a note at interest for the same to Futtichund payable to him or order upon demand." On the 6th Decem-

145. Bengal Consultation, 2nd April, 1739.

146. Bengal Consultation, 23rd April, 1739.

147. Bengal Consultation, 31st May, 1739.

ber "Futtichund's Gomastah demanding payment of our note to him for one hundred thousand rupees with the interest due thereon and desiring that part of it may be paid in bullion Agreed that the President do pay the same and that five chests of bullion be delivered out of the Treasury towards discharging it in the manner Futtichund desires."¹⁴⁸

On the 24th March, 1740 the merchants at Dacca were again calling for money and the Council at Calcutta resolved to borrow two lakhs to supply their own wants and those of the factory at Dacca. In accordance with this resolution they place on record under date the 7th April "We took up at interest of Juggutseat Futtichund Ananchund one hundred twenty one thousand sicca rupees (sicca rupees 121,000) and gave our note for the same dated the 5th instant the money being then received into cash payable on demand with one per cent. per mensem premium thereon which sum completes the two laack agreed to be taken up at interest." In the previous year the factory at Patna also had borrowed Rs. 25,000 of Jagat Seth's agent and given a bill of exchange drawn on the President and Council at Calcutta and "payable forty days after date to Juggut Seat Futtichund Ananchund or order in Calcutta." The bill was paid on the 30th July.¹⁴⁹

During the last years of Shuja-ud-daula's government Haji Ahmad, whose brother, Alivardi Khan, had made himself independent Nawab of Behar, had grown more and more powerful at Murshidabad and had used his power to extort money from the English. He was now Sarfaraz Khan's "Prime Minister and great favourite"¹⁵⁰ and continued his attempts to extort money from the English. In May 1739 he demanded a large sum on the excuse that the English required a new farman to legalise their trade in Bengal. The Company's servants at Cassimbazar used their best endeavours to induce Haji Ahmad to lower his demand "and got Futtichund to make him a visit who said as much as he could on our behalf which was of great service and made Hadjee come down to ten thousand rupees which Futtichund acquainted them of and advised them to make up the affair directly since a delay would only disgust Hadjee the more and make him get the Nabob to trouble us. Hadjee also told their va-queel that if they did not make up the affair immediately he would raise his demands." The Company, therefore, thought it advisable to pay this sum.¹⁵¹

In October 1739 Haji Ahmad notified to the three European nations in Bengal that Sarfaraz Khan had been confirmed Nawab of the three provinces and expected the customary present from them on the occasion. The English

148. Bengal Consultations, 30th July, 1739; 3rd August, 1739; 6th December, 1739.

149. Bengal Consultations, 7th June, 1739; 30th July, 1739.

150. Bengal Consultations, 11th May, 1739.

151. Bengal Consultations, 7th June, 1739.

proposed to give the Nawab the same amount they had given his father but Haji Ahmad pointed out that the Nawab had been put to great expense in hiring forces to keep the country quiet and as they had reaped the benefit of this he expected them to bear a proportion of the expense by making their present larger. Rs. 10,000 was the sum demanded with presents in addition for the Diwan and other officers. Besides this a visit was due from the new chief of the Cassimbazar factory and this meant a further present. "They have been endeavouring some time to reduce these demands," the English at Cassimbazar wrote on the 14th February, 1740, "but have not been able to do it so hope we will permit them to finish it as Futtichund and Allumchund advise them to make the visit directly." The Council at Calcutta authorised them to arrange for the present and visit to the Nawab on the terms mentioned if they could not reduce them lower and on the 2nd March Mr. Eyre, the new chief at Cassimbazar, visited the Nawab.¹⁵²

For more than a month after this the letters from Cassimbazar deal solely with the price of silk and other details of the Company's trade and then, without a word of warning, without a word of explanation of the reasons for it, we find that a revolution is in progress. Alivardi Khan has invaded Bengal and arrived at Monghyr. Turning to the Persian historians we learn that discord had arisen between the Nawab and his ministers with the result that within fifteen months after the accession of Sarfaraz Khan the semi-regal viceroyalty of Bengal had passed from the house of Murshid Kuli Khan for ever.

7.

The main facts in connection with this revolution are sufficiently clear. Haji Ahmad, the Rai Raian Alam Chand and Jagat Seth Fateh Chand called in Alivardi Khan from Behar. Alivardi Khan invaded Bengal, Sarfaraz Khan was killed in the battle that followed and Alivardi Khan became Nawab. But difficulties arise as soon as we attempt to get a clear idea of the causes of the revolution and the motives of the chief actors in it. Even the actual progress of events is rendered perplexing by conflicting authorities. The character of Sarfaraz Khan is the subject of the most irreconcilable statements. According to some historians he was a ruler not unlike our own Edward the Confessor, according to others he was a hardened debauchee. A consideration of this matter will illustrate the difficulties confronting a writer who has to deal with this period of the history of Bengal and will, at the same time, have a direct bearing on the story of the life of Fateh Chand, for Sarfaraz Khan was alleged to have brought dishonour on his family. If Sarfaraz Khan was a man of unblemished moral character we shall be disposed to discredit the charge. If, on

152. Bengal Consultations, 16th February, 1739-40; 6th March, 1739-40.

the other hand, we come to the conclusion that Sarfaraz Khan was a man sunk in sensuality we shall be disposed to credit it.

According to the *Seir Mutagharin* Sarfaraz Khan "proved to be only a pious man addicted to the practices of devotion, and extremely regular in his stated prayers, he fasted three full months besides the blessed month of the Ramazan, and was scrupulous in the discharge of the several duties prescribed throughout the year; but at the same time he proved greatly deficient in the keenness of discernment, and that extent of mind, so indispensably necessary in a sovereign Prince: his soul wholly engrossed by those little practices of religion, did not pay a sufficient attention to the affairs of state, and did not reach to those niceties and those qualifications so necessary in a man of his station and rank."¹⁵³ So might some sarcastic thane of Earl Godwin have spoken of Edward the Confessor. The *Riyazu-salatin* says that Sarfaraz Khan "consecrated his life to winning the hearts of people and also sought for help and blessings from saints and hermits."¹⁵⁴ Fuzuff Ali Khan, who strove to show that it was necessity and self-defence that forced Ali-vardi Khan to depose Sarfaraz Khan says "Sarfaraz Khan was a prince of exemplary virtue: for though he possessed every incitement to voluptuousness in addition to the season of youth, yet he was not addicted to sensual enjoyments: and during his short government, in the course of which I was constantly with him, I never beheld in his conduct even a tendency towards a vicious action. But, alas! he was ignorant of the arts of policy, and possessed not an address or manners to conciliate the world, so that he became a prey to the machinations of his enemies."¹⁵⁵

Sarfaraz Khan had a very different reputation among the servants of the East India Company. According to Holwell "Independant power only increased the bad qualities, which had already taken too deep possession of Sarfaraz Khan: his excesses in spirituous liquors and women, were beyond controul and example; his insolence and impetuosity of temper became intolerable to all about him; his principal officers were treated with insults and indignities."¹⁵⁶ Scrafton declares that Sarfaraz Khan "indulged in excessive debauchery even to that degree as to disorder his faculties; soon rendered himself odious to his people, and lost the affections of those who might have supported him."¹⁵⁷ Orme says that he was "a man of mean abilities, and governed only by his

153. *Seir Mutagharin*, Vol. I, p. 392.

154. p. 288.

155. Quoted in Scott's *History of Dekkan to 1790*, Vol. II, p. 315.

156. Holwell's *Interesting Historical Events* (1776), Part I, p. 73.

157. Scrafton, *Reflections on the Government, etc. of Indostan* (1763), p. 56.

rices." His profligacy "increased with the means of indulgence: and his debaucheries went to an excess that disordered his understanding."¹⁵⁸

There is one scrap of evidence which, at first sight, seems to support the unfavourable view of the character of Sarfaraz Khan. He possessed enormous wealth—the accumulated hoards of his father and grandfather. All of this was seized by Alivardi Khan. But some of the possessions of Sarfaraz Khan had no attraction for Alivardi Khan. The latter prided himself on the fact that he had only one wife and was faithful to her. Accordingly "Haji Ahmad and his sons and relations possessed themselves of Sarfaraz Khan's fifteen hundred pretty female dependants and slaves."¹⁵⁹ It would, however, be unjust to discredit the testimony of Eusuff Ali Khan on this evidence. All writers agree that Sarfaraz Khan's father was a voluptuary. Holwell asserts that Haji Ahmad ransacked the provinces to obtain for his master, regardless of cost, the most beautiful women that could be procured, and never appeared at the Nawab's evening levee "without something of this kind in his hand."¹⁶⁰ Obviously among the possessions that Shuja-ud-daula left to his son was a huge seraglio. The author of the *Riyazu-s-salatin*, from whom the above quotation has been made, probably intended to convey this view for he expressly states that the treasures which Alivardi Khan confiscated were the hoards of past Nawabs. Otherwise he has been guilty of strange forgetfulness. One of his authorities was an anonymous Persian historian who had written a history of Bengal at the wish of Governor Vansittart. A few pages before he had followed this authority very closely—frequently using the same words—up to the point where he found the story that Sarfaraz Khan had a harem of 1500 women in whose company he spent his time to the total neglect of all affairs. Here he stopped short, rejected the words of his authority, and substituted the statement quoted on a preceding page.¹⁶¹

As there is no possibility of reconciling the irreconcilable we have to choose between the two opposite views of the character of Sarfaraz Khan. On one side Eusuff Ali Khan speaks from personal knowledge. The author of the *Seir*

158. Orme, *History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Hindostan* (1770), Vol. II, p. 29.

159. *Riyazu-s-salatin*, p. 321.

160. *Interesting Historical Events*, Part I, p. 65.

161. Sarfaraz Khan "consecrated his life to winning the hearts of people, etc." A manuscript copy of the history of the anonymous Persian historian is in the possession of Khondkar Farl Rubbee, Khan Bahadur, Diwan to the Nawab Bahadur of Murshidabad. The Khan Bahadur compared this with the Persian Text of the *Riyazu-s-salatin* with the result stated above. It was quite obvious that the author of the *Riyazu-s-salatin* had deliberately rejected the anonymous writer's statement. Vansittart became Governor in August, 1760.

Mutaqherin was also in an exceptional position to learn the truth. His mother was a relation of Alivardi Khan and his father held an important post in his service. He himself was intimately acquainted with all the prominent men of the time. If we say that the former is guilty of deliberate falsehood and the latter of suppressing the truth we are led into this position—that two apologists of Alivardi Khan deliberately and falsely weakened their case by praising Alivardi Khan's adversary. On the other side we have Orme who wrote at Madras and obtained his information about Bengal from correspondents. Sraffton arrived in Bengal some years after the death of Sarfaraz Khan and spent the early years of his service at Dacca. Holwell states that he was in western Bengal as early as 1733 and wrote the first draft of his history in 1750.¹⁶² His testimony would have great weight if it could be relied on but unfortunately we can never be sure when he is telling the truth. The Bengal Consultations contain nothing derogatory to the character of Sarfaraz Khan and contain the positive fact that the Company's servants made great efforts to secure his friendship.

This leads us to the story in connection with which it was necessary to discuss the character of Sarfaraz Khan. It was said that Fatch Chand became a bitter enemy of Sarfaraz Khan on account of a wanton outrage committed by the latter on the honour of his family. The story will be found in the pages of Orme and Sraffton. Jonathan Scott, a captain in the East India Company's service and Persian secretary to Warren Hastings, who appended a history of Bengal from the accession of Alivardi Khan to the year 1780 to his translation of Ferishta, states in a footnote that he had heard the story but was unable to say whether it was true as he had also heard it contradicted by many persons.¹⁶³ Holwell has told the story with a wealth of detail, the offspring of his own imagination, which we do not find in other writers. This is his story:—¹⁶⁴

"A few months after Suffraz Khan came to the government, he threw a disgrace on Futtuah Chand's house, which laid the foundation of his precipitate fall. The fact, though well-known to a few, was only whispered, out of respect to the power and credit of that family, which had maintained, even from the reign of Aurung Zebe, a character of distinguished consideration. . . .

"He had about this time married his youngest grandson,¹⁶⁵ named Seet Mortab Roy, to a young creature of exquisite beauty; aged about eleven years. The fame of her beauty coming to the ears of the Soubah, he burned with curiosity and lust for the possession of her; and sending for Jaggaut Seet, demand-

162. *Interesting Historical Events*, Part I, pp. 13, 14 (note), 57.

163. *Scott's History of Dekkan*, etc. Vol. II, p. 316.

164. *Interesting Historical Events*, Part I, pp. 75-77.

165. Fatch Chand had two grandsons. Mahtab Rai was the elder of the two.

a sight of her;—The old man (then complete fourscore)¹⁶⁶ begged and intreated that the Soubah would not stain the honour and credit of his house; nor load his last days with shame; by persisting in a demand which he knew the principles of his cast, forbid a compliance with.

"Neither the tears nor remonstrances of the old man had any weight on the Soubah; who growing outrageous at the refusal, ordered, in his presence, his house to be immediately surrounded with a body of horse; and swore on the Kheran, that if he complied in sending his grand-daughter, that he might only see her, he would instantly return her without any injury.

"The Seet reduced to this extremity, and judging from the Soubah's known impetuosity, that his persisting longer in a denial would only make his disgrace more public, at last consented; and the young creature was carried with the greatest secrecy in the night to visit him. She was returned the same night; and we will suppose (for the honour of that house) uninjured. Be this as it may, the violence was of too delicate a nature, to permit any future commerce between her and her husband.

"The indignity was never forgiven by Jaggaut Seet; and that whole powerful family, consequently, because inveterate, tho' concealed enemies to the Soubah."

The objections to the story are these. It is not mentioned by the Indian historians, indeed the Seir Mutaqueria states that, for a time, Sarfaraz Khan molested neither Fateh Chand nor even Haji Ahmad. It is repudiated by the Seth family. It is not necessary as an explanation of the fact that Jagat Seth Fateh Chand was hostile to Sarfaraz Khan. It was contradicted by many persons as early as the time of Warren Hastings. Lastly, if a case has been established for accepting the character of Sarfaraz Khan as presented by Indian historians, the story must be rejected altogether. In spite of the elaborate narration of Holwell, future writers on this period of the history of Bengal will do well to follow Scott's example and relegate the story to a footnote. It would be still better to reject it altogether.

By this time the reader must be feeling irritated at the disparaging remarks that have been made in the course of this chapter against Mr. Holwell and his irritation will pass into strong condemnation unless some justification for them is given. The writer, too, has a duty to perform which he has deferred to the present moment. He has to defend Jagat Seth Fateh Chand against the charge of forging a farman—a charge which Holwell alone, unsupported by evidence, has brought against him. The defence will be, and it is the only

¹⁶⁶ A touch of Holwell's imagination. The family records state that Fateh Chand was a boy when he was adopted by Manik Chand in 1700. According to Holwell's Statement he was a man of over 40 when adopted.

possible defence under the circumstances, that as a historian Holwell is absolutely untrustworthy and as a man his word would not be taken in any court of law unless corroborated by the strongest evidence.

8.

John Zephaniah Holwell has received the eulogy of modern writers for his gallant defence of Calcutta in 1756 after the desertion of Governor Drake and his chief officers. He was the principal survivor of the Black Hole tragedy and wrote a narrative of his sufferings. When Clive left India in February 1760 Holwell succeeded him as Governor of Calcutta but in August was superseded by Vansittart. His great achievement as Governor was to work up a case, in a most unscrupulous manner, against Nawab Mir Jafar. He gained Governor Vansittart over to his views and in October 1760 Mir Jafar was deposed to the great indignation of seven gentlemen of the Council, who strongly protested against the measure and asserted that if the President had consulted the whole Council the measure would have been rejected by a majority.¹⁶⁷ He was a man of great ability which he used unscrupulously to secure his own ends. Clive condemns him in the strongest terms. "Mr. Holwell is a specious and sensible man," he wrote, "but from what I have heard and observed myself I cannot be persuaded he will ever make use of his abilities for the good of the Company."¹⁶⁸ He trembled to think of the fatal consequences if he were succeeded by such a mercenary man. "Mr. — has talents, but I fear wants a heart, therefore unfit to preside where integrity as well as capacity are equally essential."¹⁶⁹ It seems ungenerous to add that when Siraj-ud-daula besieged Calcutta Holwell would have run away with the others if he had been able. But the statement was made at the time. Ives mentions it without disapproval¹⁷⁰ and Clive believed it. "I am well informed," he said, "there is no merit due to him for staying behind in the fort, nothing but the want of a boat prevented his escape and flight with the rest."¹⁷¹

To qualify himself to write on the history of India Holwell "studiously perused all that has been written of the empire of Indostan, both as to its ancient as well as more modern state; as also the various accounts transmitted to us, by authors in almost all ages (from Arrian, down to the Abbe de Guyon) concerning the Hindous, and the religious tenets of the Brahmins."

¹⁶⁷ Holwell, *India Tracts* (1774), p. 167.

¹⁶⁸ Clive to William Mahbot 31st January, 1757. (Hill's *Bengal in 1756-57*, Vol. II, p. 186).

¹⁶⁹ *Malcolm's Life of Clive* (1836), Vol. II, p. 137 and 139. Asterisks are placed for the name but it is quite clear that Holwell is the man.

¹⁷⁰ *A Voyage from England to India in the year 1754 to 1773*, p. 83. Ives was Surgeon to Admit Watson.

¹⁷¹ In letter quoted above.

He proceeds "to pronounce them all very defective, fallacious, and unsatisfactory to an inquisitive searcher after truth."¹⁷² Holwell may have been right, for all his reading did not save him from making the elementary blunder of declaring that Prince Nicosir, a pretender to the Empire in 1719, was the son of the great Akbar who died in 1605.¹⁷³ If Holwell is correct in his history of the Mughal Empire from the death of Aurungzeb to Muhammad Shah then Elphinstone's History of India needs revision for that period. If the *Seir Mutaqherin* approximates to history then Holwell's account of the Transactions in Bengal from 1717 to 1750 is romance. To relate all the instances in which they differ and to say that the former is right and the latter wrong would serve no good purpose. But if Holwell deals with the affairs of the Company during that period and is wrong in his facts, if further, he shows an ignorance of the greatest event in the history of the Company in Bengal between the founding of Calcutta and its capture by Siraj-ud-daula which would have disgraced the youngest writer in the Company's service then we can at once dismiss his claims to be an authority on the history of the country government.

The only reference of importance made by Holwell in his history to the affairs of the Company is this. Shuja-ud-daula "made sundry regulations respecting the trade of the provinces, both inland and foreign; casting his eyes particularly on the Europeans; and attentive that they should not clandestinely partake of greater immunities and advantages, than the terms of their *Phirmaunds* or grants, gave them a title to. To this end, he increased the number of *Chowkees* (or places for the receipts of customs) to twenty, upon the several rivers; whereas, before his government, there were only two; *Buxsh Bundar*, and *Azingunge*."¹⁷⁴ Two Indian historians of Bengal have copied this statement into their books.

In reality one of the great grievances of the English against *Murshid Kuli Khan* was the extortions they were subjected to by these *chaukis*. In 1708 Governor Pitt of Madras complained to a high officer of the Emperor Bahadur Shah of the great abuses and obstructions to the Company's trade in Bengal, particularly in bringing goods from Patna, Dacca, Rajmahal, Malda and Cassimbazar "every little Governour having erected all along Ye rivers *Chowkeys* who Exort (sic) Custom and what they please, and will pay no reverence to ye Royall Authority, In so much that our Goods on ye boates are often coming down 6 or 8 Months, so that we Either loose ye Monsoon to send them on our ships Or they are damaged and Rotten before they

172. *Interesting Historical Events*, Part I, p. 5.

173. *Interesting Historical Events*, Part I, p. 37. He was the son of Prince Akbar.

174. *Interesting Historical Events*, Part I, p. 56.

arrive."¹⁷⁵ In 1717 the Company had to keep in constant pay 220 men besides officers to provide convoys for their goods because "Jaffer Caun Sooba of Bengal encourages the interrupting our Affaires and Stopping Our Goods by under Officers and Choukeydars."¹⁷⁶ Two brisk engagements had previously occurred in 1713, once at the "Chowkey of Terragonny," in which the convoy burnt the chauki down,¹⁷⁷ and the other at "Conna Chowkey" where the convoy killed between twenty and thirty of the chauki people with the loss of one officer killed and one soldier wounded.¹⁷⁸ No one would guess from Holwell's remarks that, as far as the English were concerned, these chaukis were not entitled to interfere with the English for under the Emperor's farman and the perwannas of successive viceroys they were entitled to trade custom free in Bengal, Behar and Orissa upon paying Rs. 3,000 per annum at Hugli and the rent for their settlement at Calcutta.

But there is worse to come. "The embassy conducted by John Surman to the court of the emperor Farrukhiyar was the most important step taken by the English in Bengal from the foundation of Calcutta by Charnock to the conquest of Bengal by Clive."¹⁷⁹ If Holwell shows, as he does, gross ignorance with regard to such an event as this, his character as a historian is gone. He writes "When Mr. Surman (head of the embassy sent by the Company to the emperor Farrucseer, to solicit the last phirmaund, and explanation of former grants) was on his return to Fort William, he pitched his tents in the neighbourhood of Moorshadabad, and having acquired from the Emperor a title and rank in the list of Omrahs, something superior to that which Jaffier Khan (then Suba of Bengal) bore, Mr. Surman expected the first visit. Jaffier Khan allowed Mr. Surman's superior title, but considering himself in rank the third Suba of the empire, and Viceroy of Bengal confirmed from court, thought the dignity of his post demanded the first visit from Mr. Surman: frequent messages passed between them, touching this ceremonial, for the space of three days; but neither stooping, Mr. Surman struck his tents, and returned to Calcutta. Thus an injudicious punctilio in Mr. Surman destroyed all future cordiality with a man, on whom (from the nature and power of his post) so much depended, for the due execution of those phirmaunds granted by Farrucseer."¹⁸⁰

The whole story is pure fiction. There is not the slightest reference to a single detail of it in Surman's Diary and other papers, edited by the late Dr.

175. Wilson's Early Annals of the English in Bengal, Vol. II, Part II, p. 263.

176. Wilson's Early Annals of the English in Bengal, Vol. II, Part I, p. 281.

177. Wilson's Early Annals of the English in Bengal, Vol. II, Part I, p. 97.

178. Wilson's Early Annals of the English in Bengal, Vol. II, Part I, p. 141.

179. Wilson's Early Annals of the English in Bengal, Vol. II, Part II, Introduction, p. 4.

180. Holwell, India Tracts, p. 421.

C. R. Wilson and published by the Government of Bengal in 1911. What makes the whole thing still more extraordinary is the fact that Surman did not pass by Murshidabad. When he arrived at the headwaters of the Bhagirathi which flows past Murshidabad he did not proceed down that river but made a detour and went down the Jalangi river, joining the Bhagirathi at Kistnagar and thus avoiding Murshidabad altogether. There is no possibility of doubt about the matter. On November 3rd, 1717, Surman arrived at Rajmahal and left on the 5th. On the 6th he was opposite Aurungabad, on the 7th at Murcha, on the 8th at Jalangi, on the 9th at Mirgi and on the 10th at Kistnagar.¹⁸¹

But Holwell was not merely an inaccurate historian. He was quite capable of inventing the charge he brought against Jagat Seth Fateh Chand and in the absence of other evidence we have every right to assume that he did so. The chief of the factory at Dacca, the chief and second of the factory at Cassimbazar, accused Holwell of fabricating a speech and ascribing it to Alivardi Khan. All the evidence we possess is in their favour and Holwell's defence is so lame that it practically convicts him.¹⁸² In 1766 Clive and his Council considered it their duty to acquaint the Court of Directors that the "horrible massacres with which Holwell had charged Nawab Mir Jafar were "cruel aspersions on the character of that Prince" and had not the least foundation in truth. The persons who, according to Holwell, had been put to death by Mir Jafar "are all now living, except two, who were put to death by Meeran, without the Nawab's consent or knowledge."¹⁸³

These two facts have attracted the notice of other writers. But what seems almost incredible is the astounding fact that no one appears to have noticed that in the very same volume in which Holwell charges Jagat Seth Fateh Chand with fraud he himself stands convicted of precisely the same fraud. From his own writing this bad man stands revealed as one of the world's great imposters. He asserts that the leisure hours of his thirty years' residence in India were spent in collecting materials relative to the history and religion of the inhabitants of the country. Many curious Hindu manuscripts came into his possession and among them "two very correct and valuable copies of the Gentoo Shastah."¹⁸⁴ procured with great labour and at great expense he spent eighteen months in translating the Sastra.¹⁸⁵ In one year more he would have completed the work but the catastrophe of 1756 intervened and when Calcutta was captured he lost manuscript and translation.

181. Wilson's *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. II, Part 2, pp. 247, 248.

182. H.H.'s *Bengal in 1756-57*, Vol. II, pp. 15, 16, 162, 163, Vol. III, pp. 355, 356, 357.

183. Long's *Selections from Unpublished Records of Government*, p. 429.

184. *Interesting Historical Events*, Part I, p. 3.

185. *Ibid.*

By an unforeseen and extraordinary event "that possibly I may hereafter relate" (he never does) he recovered some of his manuscripts.¹⁸⁶ Hence he was able to give to the world an account of what he calls the "Chartah Bhade of Bramah," the oldest and purest of the sacred writings of the Hindus. In Holwell's time only three or four families were capable of reading and expounding it from the Sanskrit character.¹⁸⁷ He obtained his information concerning it not from ordinary learned Brahmins who, in spite of their knowledge of the truth, paupered to the corrupt beliefs of the mob, but from those "whose purity of principle and manners, and zeal for the primitive doctrines of Bramah's Shastah, sets them above disguising the truth."¹⁸⁸ Holwell gives an account of the doctrines contained in the "chartah Bhade of Bramah"¹⁸⁹ and a translation of the first book and a section of the second. This version of the most ancient sacred book of the Hindus will make Sanskrit scholars gasp and stare. But what condemns the whole thing as a colossal fraud is the fact that Holwell has retained some words of the original in his translation which he explains in footnotes and from these words it appears that his manuscript of the "chartah Bhade" which only a few Brahmin families were capable of reading and expounding from the Sanskrit character, was written in a mixture of colloquial Bengali and Hindustani¹⁹⁰—the latter predominating. The fourth "sublime book" of the "Chartah Bhade" which "must lie in oblivion, until some one, blessed with opportunity, leisure, application, and genius, brings them to light" was, according to Holwell, called by Hindus "Bramah Ka Insof (insaf) Bhade! or "Bramah's Book of Justice."¹⁹¹

An English reader may, perhaps, appreciate the point better by an illustration. Let him imagine what his feelings would be if a publisher placed

186. Ibid. p. 4.

187. Interesting Historical Events, Part II, p. 15.

188. Interesting Historical Events, Part II, p. 9 and p. 21.

189. Interesting Historical Events, Part II, pp. 9-21.

190. He starts his translation with the words "God is one" which according to a footnote are a translation of "ekhummesha" (ek = hamesha?) pure Hindustani (Int. Hist. Events, Part II, p. 31). The other words of the Sanskrit original given in the translation or in footnotes are:—debtah (angels) logue (a people, multitude or congregation) debtah-logue (the angelic host) p. 35, hamar par hamar, (thousands upon thousands), p. 42. Mahah Surge (supreme heaven) onderah (intense darkness), p. 44; doonahi or dunnah (the world), dunna-bundah (the worlds or the universe), boboons (regions or planets), p. 43, ghoij (the cow) ghoijal (cows), goijal harry (a cow-house), mihurd (the common name of man, from marto, matter or earth), Jheals (water, fluid), eastmaan (the air), p. 51. Jogues (ages), p. 55, perest logue (purified people), p. 103, munnoo logue (people of contemplation from mun or mon, thought, reflection), p. 104, modes (discord), kytos (confusion, tumult), p. 106, surjes (the sun), chunder (the moon), p. 110.

191. Interesting Historical Events, Part II, p. 101.

before him a translation of what purported to be a hitherto unknown poem of Homer and he found that all the words of the original retained in the text or explained by the translator in footnotes were words of modern colloquial Greek mixed with a greater number of Turkish words. Such was the bare-faced fraud perpetrated by Holwell. It was for this that Voltaire gave him grateful thanks.¹⁹² This is the man that charged Jagat Seth Fateh Chand with fabricating a farman.

Holwell is popularly known as the historian of the Black Hole tragedy. Even here it is necessary constantly to bear in mind Clive's caution against him and his companions "I would have you guard against everything these gentlemen can say," he said, "for, believe me, they are bad subjects and rotten at heart."¹⁹³ In the first version that Holwell gave of which there is any record he declared that the guards of Siraj-ul-daula fired into the prison during the whole night.¹⁹⁴ This statement was soon discarded and he declared that the guards "ceased not insulting us the whole night."¹⁹⁵ In his final elaborate version we are told that the prisoners insulted the guards "to provoke them to fire in upon us."¹⁹⁶ The details of what happened in that prison house in the course of the night of the 20th June, 1756, will probably never be known. But it is time that Holwell's narrative should be recognised for what it really is—an ingenious and impudent puff of John Zephaniah Holwell.

In 1876 Sir William Hunter included in his "Statistical Account of Bengal" a short history of the Seths of Murshidabad founded on materials supplied by the head of the family. Among these materials was an explanation of Fateh Chand's alliance with Alivardi Khan. "Murshid Kuli Khan had, in the course of business, deposited with Manik Chand a sum of seven krors of rupees which had never been repaid. When Sarfaraz Khan, on his accession, pressed for payment, Fathi Chand begged for a reasonable interval for its liquidation, and, in the meanwhile, leagued himself with Alivardi Khan, who was already preparing for revolt in Behar."¹⁹⁷ No historian mentions an incident of this kind and it seems incredible that Sarfaraz Khan should have allowed such a huge sum of money to remain unchallenged in Fateh Chand's possession all these years. It may be a variant of a story, though altered al-

192. Quoted by Busteed in *Echoes from Old Calcutta*.

193. Clive to Pigot, *Malcolm's Life of Clive*, Vol. I, p. 159.

194. Letter from Sykes 8th July, 1756. *Hill's Bengal in 1756-57*, Vol. I, p. 62.

195. Letter from Holwell to Council, Fort St. George, 3rd August, 1756. *Hill's Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 166.

196. Holwell's Narrative.

197. *Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. ix, p. 255.

most beyond recognition, which is given in the *Riyazu-s-salatia*.¹⁹⁸ When Sarfaraz Khan obtained information from his emissaries that his three ministers were plotting against him in alliance with Alivardi Khan he determined to dismiss them from their offices. They, however, reminded him of their years of meritorious service, they declared that there were large outstandings of revenue to be collected, they hinted that they would incur heavy losses if they were dismissed at once and requested Sarfaraz Khan to postpone their dismissal until they had submitted the annual balance sheet which was due in about three months' time. Sarfaraz Khan allowed himself to be duped and the balance sheet, if presented at all, was presented to Alivardi Khan. It is hard to believe that Sarfaraz Khan was as simple as this.

If we discard these stories, the offspring of gossip and rumour, a plain tale remains. During his father's lifetime Sarfaraz Khan had his own household, with his own officers, civil and military.¹⁹⁹ To some of these men Sarfaraz Khan had become greatly attached. When their master became Nawab they had great expectations of power and wealth but their hopes were disappointed when Sarfaraz Khan, in obedience to his father's last wishes, confirmed Haji Ahmad, the Rai Baian Alam Chand and Jagat Seth Fateh Chand in office. This was not all. To the pangs of disappointed ambition was added the bitterness of hauled revenge. They had grievances of long standing against Haji Ahmad and when Shuja-ud-daula died it seemed to them that the time had come to pay off old scores. They clamoured against the appointment of the three ministers and gave Sarfaraz Khan no peace until he had dismissed Haji Ahmad and his two friends from office.

Sarfaraz Khan had made some powerful enemies. Haji Ahmad's sons and relations were governors of districts and his brother Alivardi Khan was Governor of Behar. Sarfaraz Khan's friends saw the danger of leaving so much power in the hands of the family of the dismissed minister. They advised Sarfaraz Khan to seize and imprison Haji Ahmad's sons. But Haji Ahmad had managed to convince the Nawab that he harboured no ill-will on account of his dismissal and was still attached to his interests. He declared that he was weary of the cares of office and had, indeed, reason to be thankful to the Nawab who had relieved him of the burden and given him the opportunity of spending his old age in religious retirement.²⁰⁰ Sarfaraz Khan was completely deceived and is said to have reduced his army at Haji Ahmad's instigation. As a sign of his sincerity he disclosed to Haji Ahmad the proposal that had been made to seize the latter's sons. The only result was to hurry on the preparations

198. *Riyazu-s-salatia*, p. 310.

199. *Riyazu-s-salatia*, p. 308.

200. Scott's *History of Dekkan*, etc., Vol. II, p. 316.

which Haji Ahmad and Alivardi Khan were making to dethrone Sarfaraz Khan for Haji Ahmad apprehended that the Nawab might at any time be persuaded to follow the advice of those who were his real friends. A proposal of Sarfaraz Khan's to marry his son to a relation of Haji Ahmad was construed as an insult to the family on the ground that the lady was already betrothed to Mirza Mahmud, better known afterwards as Siraj-ud-daula, and when Sarfaraz Khan interfered in the affairs of Behar Alivardi Khan decided on action.

Alivardi Khan acted vigorously and with the ability which characterised all his measures. He wrote to court for a farman conferring on him the government of the three provinces with injunctions to recover Bengal and Orissa from the hands of Sarfaraz Khan. He complained that Sarfaraz Khan had coined money in the name of Nadir Shah, the Persian king who had plundered Delhi a few months before, and had had the Khutbah recited after his name. What appealed with greater force to the corrupt nobles at Delhi was a promise of a krur of rupees besides the annual tribute and the wealth of Sarfaraz Khan. He mustered his troops on the pretence that he intended to march against a refractory zemindar. When he received favourable news from Delhi he placed guards on all the roads leading to Murshidabad so that no news of his movements might reach the capital and after exacting an oath of fidelity from his officers he began his march. Previously he had written a letter to Jagat Seth Fatch Chand—his friend as the *Seir Mutaqherin* calls him on two occasions—informing him of the date on which he was setting out for Murshidabad. The letter was despatched by a trusty man who had orders to deliver it on a certain day which was pointed out to him. This was the day on which Alivardi Khan reckoned on capturing the town which guarded the entrance into Bengal. All fell out as he wished. The letter was presented on the day the fortress was captured. Jagat Seth read the letter and from its date was able to calculate that Alivardi Khan had entered Bengal and in four or five days would reach Murshidabad. "With an air seemingly alarmed, he immediately mounted, and with much consternation in his features, he presented to Sarfaraz Khan the letter which he had just received from Alivardi Khan, whom he suspected, said he to be now at Radjeemahal; at the same time he produced another letter from Asly-verdy Khan to that Prince himself. The purport was this; "since, after the many affronts received by my brother Hadji-Ahmed, attempts have been made upon the honour and chastity of our family, your servant in order to save that family from farther disgrace, has been obliged to come so far, but with no other sentiments than those of fidelity and submission. Your servant hopes therefore that Hadji-Ahmed shall receive leave to come to me with his family and dependants."²⁰¹

²⁰¹ *Seir Mutaqherin*, Vol. I, p. 359.

The blow fell upon Sarfaraz Khan without warning. He saw that he had been deceived and bitterly reproached all whom he suspected to be Alivardi's friends. But words were of small avail. It was a time for action. He summoned an assembly of all his ministers and officers. The first question to be decided was whether Haji Ahmad should be dismissed to his brother or not. Haji Ahmad promised that if he were allowed to go to his brother he would persuade him to return to his government. Some believed him, some did not. The question was settled by Ghaus Khan, one of the most devoted of Sarfaraz Khan's officers. He argued that it was useless to imprison an old man. That would not drive Alivardi Khan back to Behar. If Haji Ahmad fulfilled his promise all would be well, if not, it mattered little. If they were ready and willing to encounter Alivardi Khan in battle, they need not fear the addition of a single man who would neither add to, nor detract from, the strength of the enemy. So Haji Ahmad was allowed to go. He fulfilled his promise by persuading his brother to return some hundred yards in the direction of Behar and then left him to resume his march.²⁰²

Meanwhile Sarfaraz Khan and his council had decided to advance against the invader. In three or four days' time the army arrived at Khamrah where a halt was called to receive the report of messengers who had been sent to ascertain Alivardi Khan's real intentions. They reported that Alivardi Khan would submit if Sarfaraz Khan dismissed from his council the enemies of his family and that in token of his sincerity he had sent a Koran upon which he had sworn the most sacred oaths. Alivardi Khan's enemies afterwards declared that this Koran was only a brick enclosed in a casket.

Sarfaraz Khan would not part with his friends. He marched on and faced the army of Alivardi Khan at Gheriah on the banks of the Bhagirathi. Messengers went to and fro between the two armies carrying, on behalf of Alivardi Khan, proposals similar to those made at Khamrah and with a similar result. The aid of treachery was invoked by both sides. The Seir Mutaqherin states that Jagat Seth sent letters to all of Alivardi Khan's officers promising them bribes according to their rank, if they would seize Alivardi Khan and deliver him up to Sarfaraz Khan. On this the translator, who lived for some time at Murshidabad, remarks that Alivardi Khan certainly attempted to corrupt the officers of Sarfaraz Khan through Jagat Seth, that one of Sarfaraz Khan's officers, who was alive when he was engaged on his translation, assured him he himself had received Rs. 4,000 to load the artillery only with earth and rubbish and that the universal report in Murshidabad was that some of the guns were ser-

²⁰² Seir Mutaqherin, Vol. I, pp. 359, 360.

ved in that manner.²⁰³ It seems clear that the indiscriminate attempt of Jagat Seth to bribe Alivardi Khan's officers was meant to fail and at the same time to furnish Alivardi Khan with a good excuse for bringing matters to a crisis. Mustapha Khan, an officer entirely devoted to Alivardi Khan, brought to him one of Jagat Seth's letters and urged him to fight at once. Alivardi Khan was, or pretended to be, impressed with his danger and gave orders for battle on the following day. Before dawn his soldiers were moving. His guns startled Sarfaraz Khan from his devotions who mounted his elephant, marched against the enemy at the head of his troops and fell in the battle.

One battle gave Bengal to Alivardi Khan though a short campaign was necessary to reduce Orissa. A day or two after the battle of Gheriah Alivardi Khan marched to Murshidabad, proceeded to the hall of audience and seated himself on the *masnad*.²⁰⁴ The officers of government and of the army together with the principal citizens of Murshidabad hastened to acknowledge his authority though the latter were filled with horror at the black ingratitude he had shown towards the son of his benefactor and looked upon him with detestation. Before many years had passed Alivardi Khan was able to remove these feelings from the minds of his contemporaries but he has not been so successful with later generations. Modern historians, especially Indian historians, are disposed to dilate on the disloyalty, treachery and ingratitude of these men and Jagat Seth Fateh Chand's association with the conspiracy is held up to obloquy. But the condemnation has been too sweeping. Circumstances have been ignored which deserve consideration if we are to mete out just blame to these men in general and Fateh Chand in particular, or if we are to understand why revolutions in Bengal in the 18th century were so frequent and so comparatively bloodless.

10.

Sarfaraz Khan had no claim to be Nawab by hereditary right. Up to the death of Aurungzeb the emperor had sent viceroys to Bengal and removed them at his pleasure. When the viceroy died the emperor could, if he wished, seize all his wealth, and it was to provide for such an eventuality as this that Murshid Kuli Khan had bought a large estate near Murshidabad which he settled upon Sarfaraz Khan with all legal forms.²⁰⁵ Succeeding emperors had generally left the governor in possession undisturbed especially if the tribute was received regularly, for they knew that any change would have to be effected by

203. "The Nabob has confined the Tope Canna Droga (top khana darogha, the officer in charge of the artillery) having discovered that he had wet all the powder and filled the cannon with Bricks and Stones" Bengal Consultations, 21st April, 1740.

204. The large cushion, etc. used by native Princes in India in place of a throne (Hobson Jobson, p. 600).

205. Stewart, *History of Bengal*.

force and all their resources were required nearer home. Loyalty, as we understand it, did not exist either towards the Emperor or the Nawab.²⁰⁶ The officials of the court and the officers of the army substituted for this an attachment to their pay and the Nawab relied on binding them to himself by the claims of gratitude for benefits received rather than by the dictates of any abstract feeling of loyalty. The spirit which animated these men differed completely from the loyalty of their contemporaries in Europe. In the same year in which Sarfaraz Khan was slain a European Empress, in the darkest hour of her fortune, appealed thus to the loyalty of her Hungarian subjects:—"Deserted by all, we rely wholly and solely upon the loyalty of the Hungarians and the valour for which they are famed of old. We entreat the estates, in this extremity of peril, to care zealously for our person, our children, the crown, and the empire." The Hungarians had small cause for being grateful to the House of Hapsburg but their reply was instantaneous and unanimous, "*Vitam nostram et sanguinem consecramus*" was shouted from many hundreds of throats and all Europe was impressed and thrilled. In the same year, too, there were many men of British blood, some at home, some in exile who, in spite of all the injuries their countrymen had suffered at the hands of the last king of the House of Stewart and in spite of years of defeat and disappointment, still persisted in their loyalty to him whom they regarded as their rightful king. Their chivalrous devotion has been finely expressed by Macaulay in his "*Jacobite's Epitaph*":—

For my true king I offered free from stain
 Courage and faith; vain faith, and courage vain.
 For him I threw lands, honours, wealth, away,
 And one dear hope, that was more prized than they.
 For him I languished in a foreign clime,
 Grey-haired with sorrow in my manhood's prime;
 Heard on Lavernia Scargill's whispering trees,
 And pined by Arno for my lovelier Tees;
 Beheld each night my home in fevered sleep,
 Each morning started from the dream to weep;
 Till God, who saw me tried too sorely, gave
 The resting place I asked, an early grave.

Compare the spirit which prompted the actions of these men with that which prompted the men of Bengal at their best. Seven years afterwards Ali-wardi Khan was menaced with ruin. He had to fight the Mahrattas and at the same time crush a revolt of a large number of his Afghan troops. They had

206. "Loyalty and patriotism, those virtuous incentives to great and noble actions, are here unknown and when they cease to fear they cease to obey . . . Money is here (if I may so express myself) the essence of power for the soldiers know no other attachment than their pay and the richest party soon becomes the strongest." Scrafton's *Reflections*, p. 30.

slain his favourite son-in-law and his brother, Haji Ahmad, at Patna. His grand-children were prisoners and treated with contumely. He called a general assembly of his friends as well as of his military officers, high and low. In moving words he appealed to them for support in the crisis. His audience was touched and one of his officers spoke for all the rest in these words:—"There is no doubt that every one of us, your servants, have been benefited by their attachment to your highness: we have every one of us experienced your favours, and received a variety of obligations from you and your family; and now we have no other intention than that of repaying you by shedding our blood in your cause. March then and we follow." Alivardi immediately produced a Koran and made them all swear to be true to their words.²⁰⁷

Siraj-ud-daula invoked the same sentiment when he appealed for help to Mir Jafar just before the battle of Plassey, "I now repent of what I have done and availing myself of those ties of consanguinity which subsist between us, as well as of those rights which my grandfather, Aaly-verdy-qhan, has doubtless acquired upon your gratitude, I look up to you, as to the only representative of that venerable personage: and hope therefore, that, forgetting my past trespasses, you shall henceforward behave as becomes a Seyd,²⁰⁸ a man united in blood to me, and a man of sentiments, who conserves a grateful remembrance of all the benefits he has received from my family: I recommend myself to you: take care of the conservation of my honour and life."²⁰⁹

In the minds of the court officials and military officers loyalty, then, was synonymous with gratitude. The zamindars, the landed gentry of the country, were men "restless and refractory by nature and by trade."²¹⁰ The people regarded revolutions with absolute indifference. They were according to the historian, "tame cowardly wretches, at all times so crouching and so ready to submit to any one that offers."²¹¹ They clung to the houses they had built and the fields they tilled. They would suffer much before they would abandon these and therefore, declared Warren Hastings, they were made to suffer much.²¹² Nor were there any ties of nationality by which the people of Bengal might have united in one common cause. Warren Hastings found that the Mahrattas were the only people of Hindostan and the Deccan who possessed such a bond of unity.²¹³

207. *Seir Mutaquerin*, Vol. I, p. 560.

208. Arabic *Saiyad*. The designation in India of those who claim to be descendants of Muhammad, (Hobson Johnson, p. 886).

209. *Seir Mutaquerin*, Vol. I, p. 767.

210. *Seir Mutaquerin*.

211. *Seir Mutaquerin*, Vol. II, p. 7.

212. Minute by the Governor General, 12th November, 1776, quoted in Hunter's Bengal M.S. Records, p. 57.

213. Warren Hastings, *Memoirs relative to the State of India*, (1786), p. 82.

It is true that Fateh Chand and his fellow conspirators acted treacherously and treachery is hateful. But when we condemn them we must remember that we are judging them by the standards of other times and by a code of honour which was not theirs. "Of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes." Treachery, if profitable, called forth admiration and received rewards. In 1743, Alivardi Khan, by an act of the most unscrupulous treachery, massacred the general and chief officers of the Mahrattas who had been induced to come to his tent by the most solemn promises of safe conduct confirmed by the most sacred oaths. By this act he received "such an addition to his character, as raised him both in the minds of his troops and of his subjects, who admired their being so suddenly delivered from these merciless ravagers: nor were the troops less pleased with their unexpected success." This was not all. He sent an account of the exploit to the Emperor and requested him to bestow honours "on every one of those who had exerted themselves so strenuously in the engagement of the tent." The Emperor did so. To Alivardi Khan in particular he sent many gifts and bestowed on him the title of "the Valiant of the Kingdom."²¹⁴ It was not for their contemporaries to throw stones at Jagat Seth and his friends on the score of treachery nor did they attempt to do so.

What filled their contemporaries with horror was the base ingratitude shown by Alivardi Khan, Haji Ahmad and the Rai Raian Alam Chand. They owed everything to Shuja-ud-daula and they deposed and slew his son. But this was not the case with Fateh Chand. It was not Shuja-ud-daula who could say that he had made Fateh Chand rich, while it is probable that he owed to Fateh Chand his easy possession of the government of Bengal. It is true, however, that Murshid Kuli Khan had been the great patron of the family and his grandson had claims on Fateh Chand. On the other hand it is necessary to appreciate Fateh Chand's position. By the unanimous opinion of historians Sarfaraz Khan was an incompetent ruler. It was probably due to this fact that Fateh Chand had not supported Murshid Kuli Khan when he wished his grandson to succeed him. The state of affairs was far more serious at the time of Shuja-ud-daula's death. Delhi had been captured by Nadir Shah and the Empire was tottering to its fall. The Mahrattas were approaching. Perilous times were at hand and Sarfaraz Khan had dismissed and alienated his most capable ministers. Had Fateh Chand supported Sarfaraz Khan he would have promoted his own ruin and the ruin of the country.

All that can be said for Alivardi Khan has been said by the author of the *Seir Mutaqherin*. "Upon the whole, altho' the slaying his Lord and benefactor was unquestionably one of the blackest actions that could be committed and

²¹⁴ *Seir Mutaqherin*, Vol. I, pp. 474, 475.

one of the most abominable events that could happen; yet it cannot be denied that Serefras Khan had no talents for government, and no capacity for business; and that, had his government lasted but some time more, such a train of evils, and such a series of endless confusions would have been the consequence of his incapacity, that disorders without number, and disturbances without end, would have arisen insensibly, and would have brought ruin and desolation on these countries and their inhabitants. The Marhattas had already cast their eyes upon these rich provinces: shortly after they attacked and invaded them on all sides; and lucky did it prove for the inhabitants of these countries that those merciless free-booters had to deal with such a man as Aali-verdy-qhan, who by his talents for both war and government; and by the exertions of a keen sabre become indefatigable, as well as by the resources of his policy, found means to repress those ravagers, and at last to expel them entirely out of Bengal. . . . Such exertions were not of a nature to be expected from Serefras Qhan and his ministers nor were they men to oppose such a torrent with any effect: whereas his rival, to such a modesty of behaviour, and to so much purity of morals, joined political and military talents, and all the renown and power which victory and success could confer: the whole forming a character, which far from being equalled by any of his contemporaries or any of his successors, would hardly find a comparison in the records of past time."²¹⁵

11.

On the 23rd April, 1740, not more than three weeks after Alivardi Khan had set out from Patna, it seemed to the English at Cassimbazar that Bengal had once more a settled government for Alivardi Khan was declared Nawab of the province and was "very severe in his justice."²¹⁶ He had, however, yet to be confirmed in his appointment by the Emperor and though he asserted that he had been acting on orders received from the Vizier Nizam-ul-mulk people doubted the truth of this.²¹⁷ On the 29th May an express messenger, sent by the English wakil at Delhi, brought the news to Patna that Alivardi Khan was confirmed Nawab of Bengal and Behar, on the 10th June the English were informed that the farman had been received at Murshidabad and by the 19th October their wakil at Cassimbazar gave them a copy of it. Shortly afterwards the Emperor conferred a new title on the Nawab together with the *Mahi*, or order of the Fish.²¹⁸

The Rai Rayan Alam Chand was dead and Haji Ahmad and Jagat Seth Fateh Chand were the two most influential persons at Murshidabad. The

²¹⁵ *Seir Mutaqherin*, Vol. I, p. 368.

²¹⁶ *Bengal Consultations*, 28th April, 1740.

²¹⁷ *Bengal Consultations*, 9th May, 1740.

²¹⁸ *Bengal Consultations*, 15th June, 1740; 23rd October, 1740; 8th March, 1741-42.

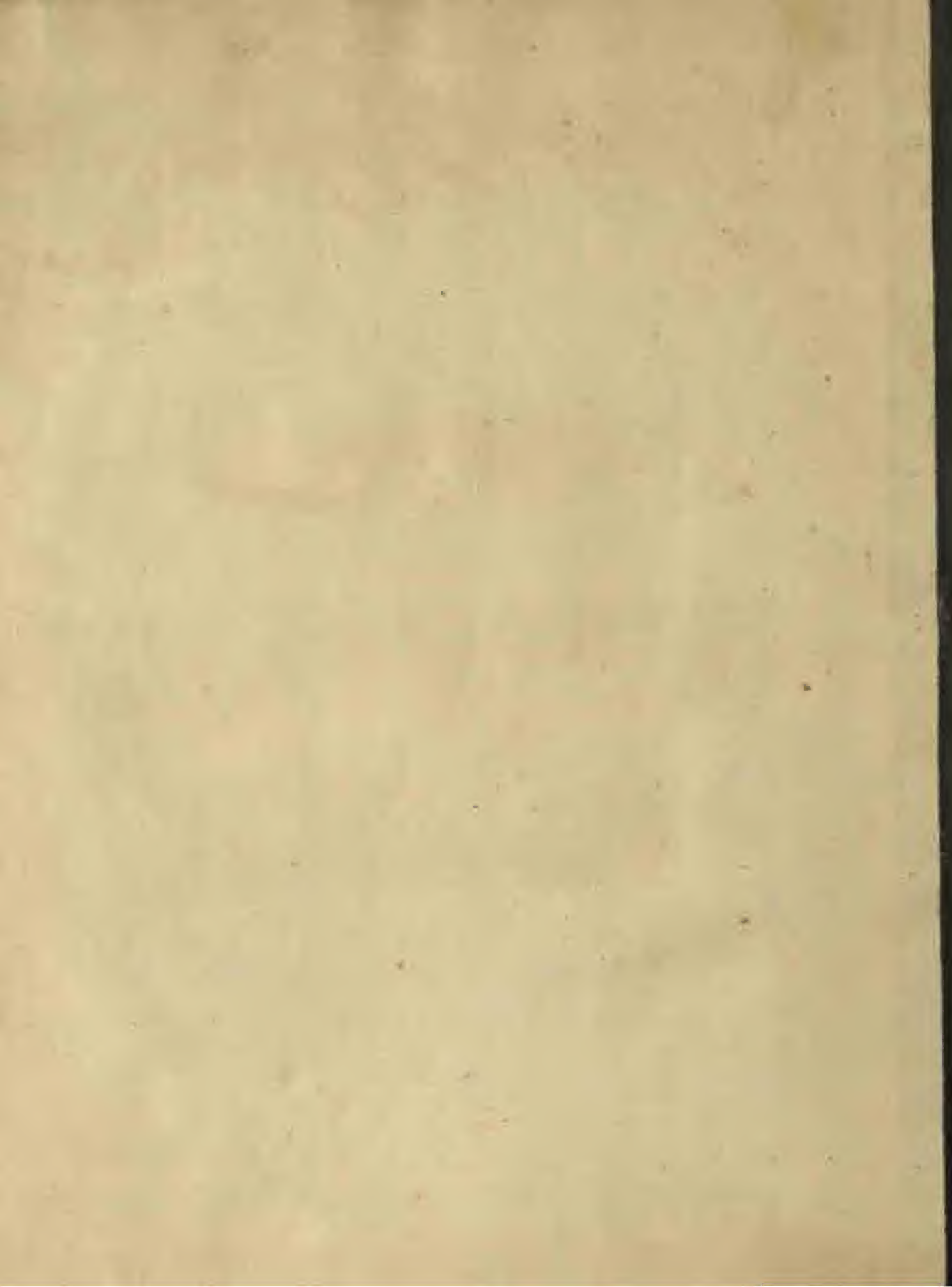
latter continued to have important business transactions with the English and continued to be their friend at the Durbar. On the 7th July, 1740, the Company borrowed a second sum of Rs. 121,000 from Jagat Seth but before the end of the month bullion arrived from England and 26 chests of this were delivered to the President partly to pay off their loan of April and partly to make advances to their merchants. On the 11th December the President and Council were informed by the Company's servants at Cassimbazar that Jagat Seth would be willing to reduce the rate of interest on loans from twelve to nine per cent. if he received a request from them to do so. The Council met on the same day and agreed "That the President do write to Futtichund and remonstrate to him the heavy Interest of 12 per cent. paid on all sums borrowed for many years past and to request that he will let the Hon'ble Company have what money they may have occasion to borrow at interest of him at their factory at Cassimbazar at nine per cent. per annum on notes of hand from the Chief &ca Council there payable on demand." On the 21st December the English at Cassimbazar borrowed Rs. 60,000 at the new rate and would have taken a larger sum but, they wrote, "the Mint having been shut up some time he could not let us have any more not having any new siccas and there would be a loss on taking old ones." Jagat Seth promised, however, that when the mint was open he would let them what they wished at the same rate and not only them but also the Council at Calcutta and, they believed, the English factories at other places. A month or two before this the English at Cassimbazar had dissuaded the Company from making a new attempt to obtain the freedom of the mint at Murshidabad. Although this privilege had been granted the English by the farman of the Emperor Farrukhsiyar they pointed out that no Nawab had paid obedience to that article of the farman and an attempt to enforce it might cause their other privileges to be called in question. "We also think," they added, "that while Futtichund lives he will always have it in his power to prevent the good effects of any solicitation thereon." 219

(To be continued.)

219. Bengal Consultations, 7th July, 1740; 25th July, 1740; 11th December, 1740; 26th December, 1740; 27th October, 1743.

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